

A

NORTHUMBRIAN TALE.



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NORTHUMBRIAN
TALE.

WRITTEN BY A LADY.

THE VARIOUS TURNS
OF FORTUNE PONDER.

Thomson's Seasons.

LONDON:

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1799.

WORTHINGTON

TALL

WINTER BY ALBERT

THIRTY-FOUR



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1874

TO
MISS STEVENSON,

MORTON-HALL, CHISWICK.

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

FOR many years an inhabitant of the hospitable mansion of your parents, I may, without vanity, consider myself well acquainted with the bent of your disposition.

With pleasure have I viewed you devote the hours appointed for recreation

recreation to the perusal of books : sometimes the marvellous, blended with morality, though not comprised within the library of your studies, have not been objected to.

With heart-felt pleasure I have received your acknowledgments for the hours I have employed in your instruction. I have indeed used, and with success, the greatest care in forming your mind, and conveying to your ear the little I was capable of imparting.

May these pages, my sweet Sophia, evince, your amusement has not been neglected by me.

Accept

Accept my offering ; and, whilst
you peruse it, let the eye of friend-
ship pass over the faults, and dwell
a moment on those passages in
which you may discern a sentiment
worthy your approbation.

I remain, with affection and
esteem,

My dear young Friend's

Sincere well-wisher,

THE AUTHORESS.

21st June, 1799.

My dear young friends

I have just received your letter of the 10th inst.

and am glad to hear that you are all well.

I am writing you a few lines to let you know

that I have received your letter of the 10th inst.

and am glad to hear that you are all well.

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SITUATED on the coast of Northumberland, stood the castle belonging to the family of Rowley: it was adjudged theirs by the division of lands made on the establishment of William duke of Normandy, when in the regal possession of England. Its fertile soil, defensive walls, and internal accommodations, had frequently incited neighbouring barons

to attempt its reduction; but the fidelity of its vassals proving its strongest guard, it had descended in the possession of the ancestors of Hildebrand lord Rowley, who, towards the close of the reign of Richard Cœur de Lion, fixed his residence there.

An exterior display of religious enthusiasm induced him to comply with the fashion of the times; and, though not actuated by the motives which instigated his monarch, rendered himself remarkable by his conduct; and having prevented his name from being stigmatised, resolved to pass the remainder of his days in the almost absolute power he enjoyed in Northumberland.

Of

Of an arbitrary disposition, he preferred to reign the despot of his vassals and neighbouring husbandmen, who, obliged to submit to his power, sued for protection, and scarce refused offering homage to him they feared to offend.

During the life of the lady Rowley, the family was in general a divided one; the death of an only brother, during a visit at the castle, inspired her with an aversion to that county she could not surmount; and having a smaller estate, which at her marriage was settled on her, in Hertfordshire, she obtained the consent of her lord to establish there her household, and rarely accompanied him and sons in their long visits at the castle.

Immediately on her decease, lord Rowley, summoning his daughters, informed them of his intention to quit the seat of their mother, and reside wholly in Northumberland, whither the family repaired. Its circle consisted of the baron, three sons, and two daughters. The young men had given proofs of military ardor : inflamed with hopes of signalising themselves, they were prepared to accompany the king on a second holy expedition, when the zealous monarch was called to submit to the irresistible tyrant death, and left an exhausted kingdom in the hands of a rebellious brother.

Compelled to resign the honour they expected, they followed their father to the castle, resolving to continue

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nue till a favourable opportunity called them to action.

The heir of Rowley was named Hildebrand; he had attained his twenty-fourth year, and possessed both mental and exterior endowments; he was the rising luminary, which all contemplated with delight.

The countenance of the second, Everard, was dark as his mind; to his brothers he was reserved, to his inferiors haughty; he inherited in extreme the arbitrary and revengeful passions of his father; his infantine sports were proofs of his sanguinary disposition.

Ferdinand, whose birth was an hour later than his brother, seemed to have robbed him of the accom-
plish-

plishments of the mind; and his features, equally reverse, were the index of integrity and humanity.

The fair Isabella next blessed a fond mother, who ardently desired a daughter, but whose delicacy of constitution diminished the happiness she hoped to receive.

Last followed the gentle Emmeline, who had attained her fourteenth year, when, deprived of the tenderness of a mother, she accompanied the family to Northumberland. Attached to her sister by ties of purest affection, all places were alike; and though in early youth she had imbibed prejudices against the extensive and gloomy castle, they were easily dispersed by the prevailing arguments

guments of Isabella ; and the young Emmeline warmly confessed, in the society of her sister she felt no difference of place.

The young men had been educated in the theory of war, and had made excursions with other junior nobles in Scotland, where their different dispositions had been fully proved.

To rescue distress, to punish the oppressor, by enforcing retribution, were the aims of Hildebrand and Ferdinand ; whilst the sanguinary Everard only received satisfaction when his exploits terminated in blood.

Similarity of disposition frequently attach objects in strong bonds. Thus the lord Rowley evidently preferred

the arbitrary youth to the noble heir of his family, or the generous-hearted Ferdinand. To the latter he had, from earliest infancy, shown a want of affection, which the dutious respect of the youth could not warrant; and which not only depressed Ferdinand, but cemented a firmer affection between him and his eldest brother, to the great disturbance of the baron, who took various opportunities to debase the merits of Ferdinand, whilst he exalted those of Everard, and trusted to a constant perseverance on the same topic to effect a veneration for the abilities of his favourite, which was decidedly shown by Hildebrand to Ferdinand.

Lord Rowley perceived not, ere he

he could unite in bonds of affection his heir with Everard, the necessity of the wedding hook in the mental foil of the latter. In him vice appeared amiable; he saw him endeavour to catch his own manners, and secretly confessed the imitation gratified him.

In the frequent controversies which happened between the brothers, particularly the two younger, justice had but little share in the decision. Lord Rowley, who despotically had all cases referred to him, was ever swayed by the voice of his favourite; and at the time of their mother's death, Ferdinand, who till then had suppressed his suggestions, began to have serious thoughts of flying the unkind-

unkindness of a father, and avoiding the continual disputes with his brother.

Having prevailed on an old servant, Seward, to accompany him, whenever he should be compelled to take a step his filial adherence often made him revert from, he had still a difficulty in persuading Hildebrand to consent, so united were their affections ; an objection raised by the one failed not to influence the other.

The ladies Isabella and Emmeline bewailed the treatment Ferdinand received from their father, and by a thousand endearing caresses strove to render him less susceptible of it ; generally retired in the apartments allotted them and their female attendants,

ants, they asked no addition to their society but their two brothers, whose affection always showed itself in the tenderest expressions.

Ferdinand perceiving his brother's persevering objection to his departure, was preparing to communicate his own wishes to his sisters, and persuade them to espouse his cause. He was however prevented the painful task by the arrival of a noble guest, whose important business with lord Rowley effected what was so much the object of his desire, to leave for a time the castle.

The earl Fitzwilliam requested a private interview with the baron; and after receiving from the latter assurances of his adherence to the

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cause

cause of the general good, to which the sudden death of the late monarch had given a fatal blow, was informed by the earl of the necessity of sending a private mission to France, on whose secrecy much depended. He then added, he was empowered by the chief of the confederate barons to propose to the lord Rowley to dispatch his eldest son with the important trust, the success of which would not fail to redound immortal honour on his noble family.

Lord Rowley would have willingly deprived his heir of the glory of the mission, could he have consigned it to his favourite; but the prudence and abilities of Hildebrand were known to those who had chosen him

him their representative; and all the baron could obtain for Everard was the privilege of accompanying his brother to some garrison between the sea-ports and Paris, and there, remaining ignorant of the weighty affair which was to be entrusted alone to Hildebrand, wait his return.

The baron, in his son's name, pledged himself for the performance of the articles, which, sealed, were to be delivered to Hildebrand, and not opened till his arrival on the continent.

The hour of dinner was announced by the preparatory bell; the earl, who had accepted the invitation of his host to partake of it, was attended to the family's sitting-room, and introduced

roduced to the young men, and afterwards to their amiable sisters. He paid the usual compliments to the lady Isabella, whilst the gentle Emmeline fixed for some moments his attention. She was not insensible to his gaze, which quickly suffused her countenance with a crimson blush.

He perceived the cause of her confusion, and removed it by addressing Hildebrand, and congratulating him on the possession of accomplishments which might one day be called forth in the service of his country.

“ I trust, my lord,” replied Hildebrand, “ my exertions may never be wanting ; my endeavours to succeed will atone for my inability.”

“ With

“ With such sentiments,” said lord Fitzwilliam, “ no doubt of success can be entertained; and a righteous cause inspires a tenfold vigour.”

“ And fame,” interrupted Everard, “ whatever be the cause, must actuate most powerfully :—May my sword, sheathed in illustrious blood, proclaim this arm invincible !”

As he spoke, his motion accompanied his words.

The earl, turning from him, addressed Ferdinand: “ And you, young gentleman, what are your pretensions.”

“ At present, my lord,” returned he, “ they are too confused to offer them to your lordship; may my actions never disgrace the family from whom I have the honour to spring.”

The

The expressive countenance of the earl spoke in eloquent language his approbation of the modest youth, whilst the extended eye-balls of Everard darted looks no ways congenial with fraternal affection.

The table was now covered; and the noble guest, seated between the sisters, by repeated attentions proved his admiration of both.

Having fully delivered his commission to the baron, he left it to him to arrange the intended journey, which he suggested the necessity of being instantly set about.

Lord Rowley pressed his guest to remain the night at the castle; which the earl, contrary to his inclination, was obliged to decline, having left his servants at some distance with assurances

urances of his return; he would otherwise willingly have improved an introduction to the females of lord Rowley's family, whose modesty and beauty created at first sight respect and admiration.

Towards evening the earl took leave, adding, as he addressed Emeline, a tenderness of expression parental solicitude seemed to prompt.

Soon as the family were left to themselves, the baron acquainted his sons with the cause of the late visit, and enforced in strong language the necessity of dispatch and secrecy in the execution of the mission. Hildebrand warmly, though respectfully, replied :

"If a doubt arises in the bosom
of

of my father of his son's discretion, let him consign it to a firmer pillar of his house. Heaven has blessed my lord with more supporters than Hildebrand, and"—

"Hold," interrupted the baron, "and prove your own abilities, accompanied by your brother Everard, whose prudence will direct to make no inquiries. I trust you will both acquire honour superior to your years."

Hildebrand and Ferdinand looked at each other, and were disconcerted at the proposal of their father; but Everard soon relieved them by suddenly rejecting the secondary appointment, which Ferdinand as eagerly accepted; and pleasure sat visible on their

their countenances, a moment before depressed.

Everard, not feeling an interest in the conversation, withdrew, as did the ladies Isabella and Emmeline; the two latter overcome by sentiments of purest affection, which gave rise to much anxiety at the approaching separation with their brothers, whose absence their fears suggested would be longer than proposed.

Lord Rowley continued discoursing with his son Hildebrand, evidently treating Ferdinand as a superior attendant, whom he charged to conform implicitly to his elder brother.

Ferdinand, rejoicing at the prospect

spect of a speedy departure, silently felt the unkindness of a parent, and restrained the answers his conscious innocence suggested.

Lord Rowley informed them a vessel was in readiness to convey them to France; and as the distance was short where they were to embark, recommended haste in preparations.

Hildebrand answering in both their names, they gave necessary orders. Two young men were immediately appointed to attend them, who were to be left at the port where they should disembark: having been accustomed to sea voyages, they were judged most serviceable to them.

The evening of the following day
was

was fixed for their departure. Isabella and Emmeline could not conceal their distress: they well knew the austere disposition of their brother Everard, though not the excess of his brutality. The grossness of his manners and language were tempered by his brothers; but now to be left to his guidance, for so they knew the power he had over his father would render them, was a reflexion they could not make without shuddering; much more preferable they would have considered his absence.

The morning came, and the languor of their countenances expressed how little rest the night had brought.

Hildebrand and Ferdinand retired
with

with them after breakfast, resolved to dedicate an hour in soothing tenderness, and pointing out those circumstances which rendered the family separation a desirable event. The sisters confessed the justice of their reasonings, but could not regain their wonted cheerfulness.

Ferdinand continued in conversation longer than his brother. He avoided paining them by remarking the treatment he had received from his father ; but Emmeline could not resist, when tenderly embracing him, acknowledging how ill his filial affection was rewarded ; and raising her eyes to heaven, invoked the Supreme to inspire the author of their
being

being with a just sense of the worth of his neglected son.

The day advanced, and Ferdinand was preparing to quit them, till the hour of dinner, when a sudden uproar, proceeding from the great hall, caught their attention. Isabella and Emmeline, who had accompanied their brother to the door of their apartment, remained motionless, whilst Ferdinand, seeming impelled by involuntary swiftness, was in a moment in the midst of the confusion.

A party of labourers, headed by Mr. Everard, were dragging along a peasant, who in vain attempted to speak: not a voice was distinctly to be heard.

The

The lord Rowley ordered silence; Hildebrand and Ferdinand urged the peasant to attend the decision of their father; their entreaties had no effect. He inveighed the louder, and in harsher language, against his oppressor, whose name he was not acquainted with.

Everard demanded, rather than requested, to be heard; the servants of the castle repeated inquiries, which the labourers employed by Everard could not answer satisfactorily.

"To the hall of justice with the culprit!" exclaimed the baron. The orders of their master caught the principal domestics, and in a few moments the poor wretch was placed

at

at a bar to wait the judgment of the lord Rowley.

The building to which the greatest part of the family now repaired, had been constructed by the baron to hear and decide on the misdemeanors of his tenants and vassals; and so great was the authority of the judge, no attempt had ever been made to alter or revoke his sentence.

The hall dedicated to trials afforded entertainment to its arbitrary proprietor. The building was calculated to deprive the criminal of hope; it was lofty, and its dark walls added fear to the offender.

Justice, with steady scales, was depicted in various forms; the pencil had poised her balance with even
c hand,

hand, whilst the momentary caprice of the judge was found less accurate.

A scroll, alluding to the intention of the building, was described in large characters over the elevated chair designed for the baron; on his right hand was a seat of state, appropriated for the heir of Rowley; on the left its counterpart for the favorite Everard.

For Ferdinand and occasional visitors there were appointed seats.

The hall was now filled. The baron and his sons, the numerous servants and the labourers, were in a few minutes arranged.

Everard, the accuser of the peasant, was not distinctly heard; his evidence was continually interrupted by

by his repetition of "the villain struck me."

The hardy peasant, raising his arm, seemed willing to repeat the blow; in vain he requested to be heard. The baron, whose ear had fully received the accusation of his son, would attend to no defence, nor did he require any further explanation of the accuser.

"Death, wretch!" exclaimed the baron, "is the punishment thy audacity deserves; thy ignorant and contemptible appearance lessens thy crime; to the dungeon with him, till I award his doom."

As he spoke, three confidential servants approached the peasant; and one, holding a cord in his hand, pre-

pared to bind him, whilst the baron and his sons, quitting their seats, advanced to leave the hall.

A figure now appeared, which, attracting their attention, could not fail to stop them. A youthful female, whose tattered garb, though it spoke her poverty, ill calculated to adorn, could not conceal the most interesting features nature ever boasted to have produced; words were denied her; she fell apparently lifeless in the arms of two servants, who silently continued to hold her, whilst Ferdinand, perceiving the earnestness with which his father contemplated the interesting object prevented his speaking, took upon himself to order some explanation from Seward.

The

The latter replied, he had been called by the porter of the gates to give an answer to the repeated cries and entreaties of the young creature in his arms ; that she prevailed on him to lead her to his lord, to throw herself at his feet, and sue for mercy for her father. Overcome by her anxiety, as she approached the hall, she fell, exclaiming, " in the name of heaven bear me to your lord !"

As Seward concluded, the peasant, who was silently submitting to be bound, by an involuntary movement fixed his eyes on the motionless body. " O God !" cried he, " my child !"

He endeavoured to approach her. Everard prevented him, exclaiming

to the chief of his domestics, "Obey the orders of your lord, Armstrong, and bear the villain hence."

The peasant, now finding himself obliged to submit to numbers, darted a look, which spoke more than words, uttering, "Heaven has dealt the blow! Oh! save my Beatrice from thee——"

As he spoke he was dragged away, but his voice reanimated the ghastly trembler. "My father!" exclaimed she, wildly; and looking round her, gave an agonising shriek, and fell on the pavement; having been supported on her feet at the appearance of returning life, and by a sudden exertion broke from the hold of the servants.

Hilde-

Hildebrand and Ferdinand assisted in raising her, whilst the baron, inattentive to the sollicitations of his son Everard, continued intently gazing.

Her quivering lips with some difficulty uttered, "Oh, spare my father! whatever be his fault, let Beatrice receive the punishment; save not the child, if you destroy her parent."

She clasped her hands in an attitude of entreaty, but, without strength to proceed, continued on the pavement, insensible of her own situation.

Everard, in a commanding tone, ordered the ragged wretch to be carried without the gates, and added, with a sarcastic smile, the keen air

of the north would soon effect her recovery.

The servants prepared to obey their young master, when Ferdinand, interposing, forbade them to touch her; and, turning to his father, "Do you," my lord, said he, "make known your pleasure; to remove a female sufferer in such a situation, were to rob her of the little life she seems to possess. Oh, my father! let her not be the victim for the sins of the guilty; in mercy, my lord, compassionate her distress, and afford a short asylum."

The baron, raising his eyes from the interesting object, gave orders she should be carried to the apartments of his daughters, and proper restora-

restoratives administered. Then putting his hand to his forehead, as if considering how to proceed, he hastily advanced towards the door of the hall; and without giving Everard an opportunity of arguing against his lenient commands, was attended by his two eldest sons to the western apartment, where the family usually met.

Ferdinand, whose humane breast burned with impatience to relieve the sufferer, perceiving his father at sufficient distance, took the senseless body in his arms, and carried it to the apartments of his sisters, whom he found in the place where he had left them.

They were anxiously waiting his
 c 5 return,

return, assured he would seize the first moment to dissipate the suspense in which they had continued.

“My Isabella, my Emmeline,” cried Ferdinand, “to your care my father commits this unfortunate female.” As he spoke, he carried Beatrice to a couch, and laying her gently on it, proceeded to explain as much as he himself was acquainted with.

The sisters, no less characterised for their humanity than Ferdinand, instantly began applications for her recovery; and perceiving symptoms of returning life, Ferdinand withdrew. As he quitted the room, he drew a purse from his pocket, and taking a ring from his finger, deposited

sited them in the hands of the lady Isabella, saying—"My hasty departure prevents my inquiries relative to this mysterious affair, in which I confess the appearance of the young stranger in a father's cause has greatly interested me; at leisure you will learn the aggravation of the crime which kindled my brother's vengeance. However guilty her father may prove, preserve, if possible, the innocent from his doom; perhaps these trifles may one day alleviate the fears of poverty. Should she be worthy your esteem, she must of mine; tell her she has my prayers."

Isabella placed the purse in a cabinet, and summoning two female servants, as soon as her brother

withdrew, in a short time Beatrice recovered.

The surprise she evinced on perceiving her situation on an elegant couch, and surrounded by two of the most beauteous of her own sex, as well as their attendants, raised a blush on her cheeks, which greatly heightened the softness of her features.

Her manners, her eloquence, subdued them into tears; one moment offering grateful acknowledgments for the assistance given her, then entreating their interference to obtain the release of her father.

Lady Isabella urged the necessity of composing herself, bidding her to be under no apprehension for the
life

life of her father ; and added, the baron's favourable sentiments of the cause were demonstrated by recommending her to their attention.

Beatrice sighed, and starting from the seat on which she was placed, made an effort to throw herself on her knees, imploring pardon for her familiar attitude, whilst all about her were standing.

Emmeline prevented her, and with soothing arguments endeavoured to relieve her ; then turning to one of the attendants, remarked, her own size and that of Beatrice corresponded, and ordered a suit of cloaths should be immediately brought and exchanged for the clean but tattered garments which Beatrice had on.

Agnes

Agnes obeyed, and in a few moments returned with a complete dress; and, notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of Beatrice, who urged how ill their vestments suited her humble state, she was compelled to submit, and in her new attire raised the admiration of all who assisted her.

The ladies were now summoned to dinner, to which they descended with heavy hearts, the certainty of its being the last they should partake with their brothers previous to their departure.

They consigned Beatrice to the care of Agnes, and besought the former to taste some of the food which had been provided; adding,
as

as they quitted her, they would intercede with their father to allow her remaining some days with them, by which time they trusted her own recovery would be no longer doubtful, and the liberation of her father, the effects of his innocence, or submission.

Beatrice restrained her tears a few moments, when, concluding them out of hearing, she gave vent to her full heart, and wept bitterly.

In vain Agnes strove to comfort her; the honest Abigail rather increased than lessened her affliction.

“To be sure my lord is very severe; and then for Mr. Everard, oh! he is ten times harder.”

“Alas!” replied Beatrice sobbing,

bing, "do you know my father's crime? what will they do with him? will they kill him?"

"As for killing," said Agnes, "I never heard my lord proceeded to such lengths in cool blood; but for that horrid dungeon, 'tis almost as bad—oh! I once saw a poor starved creature brought out from thence, who, I suppose, had either been forgotten to be fed, or had refused his food."

Beatrice gave a shriek of despair. "Oh God!" cried she, "and shall my father, shall him to whom I owe my existence, need a mouthful of bread, whilst such profusion is within my grasp? Oh! forbid it gracious heaven! Tell me, tell me, I conjure you!"

you!" continued she, pressing the hands of Agnes, "where is the dungeon? cannot I convey some provision to his famished lips?"

Agnes begged her to be silent; repeated all the information she could give of the dungeons and subterranean passages which she had heard belonged to the castle.

Beatrice attentively listened to all she said, and instantly conceived the idea of tracing, from the account she received, the prison of her father. She took the opportunity of a short absence of Agnes to conceal part of the victuals which had been brought her, and feigned on her return to have been partaking it.

Elate with the romantic idea which
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possessed her, she did not reflect on the impossibility of opening a door without a key, or of the variety of secret retirements. In an age when necessity compelled a master to have his vassals soldiers, subterraneous caverns were prepared, both to receive prisoners, or, in case of imminent danger, to serve as an asylum to the conquered; all that Beatrice considered was the execution of her hopes, to snatch her father from the misery of starving.

Thus passed the time, whilst the lord Rowley, his sons and daughters, met at table.

The baron inquired after the female he had sent the ladies as a present.

“ Rather,

"Rather, my lord," replied Isabella, "that you have lent us. Willingly shall we accept the gift, if you allow such an addition to our society, or at least suffer her, my father, to continue under our protection till her strength is thoroughly re-established."

The baron was prevented answering by the harsh language of Everard, who silenced the intercessions of his sisters by invectives, not indeed against Beatrice, but the insolent peasant, whose offence (insidiously addressing his father) he hoped to see punished in the most exemplary manner.

Ferdinand continued the conversation, urging his former arguments.

Justice,

Justice, however rigorously it might exert itself on the guilty, he trusted would ever show itself inclined to mercy, nor suffer revenge to breathe a thought injurious to innocence, rendered by distress sacred.

Everard began to reply: "Insulting boy!" but the baron commanding silence, the subject was no more resumed. The conversation now wholly turned on the separation about to take place.

Soon as the table was uncovered, the baron delivered to Hildebrand the sealed paper, and other instructions; urging him to dispatch the business, and prove himself worthy of higher honours.

Isabella and Emmeline perceiving
their

their father wished a short interview with Hildebrand, retired, and gave Ferdinand, who anxiously desired to know more of Beatrice, an opportunity of seeing her.

He accompanied his sisters to their apartment, and not expecting to find the alteration of dress in the interesting stranger, could scarce refrain expressions of admiration at her additional beauty.

Her cheeks, which before had lost their tint, were now suffused with a deep blush; her eyes, whose brilliancy had been restored by the concluding resolutions her discourse with Agnes had excited, gave a lustre, and rendered her irresistibly beautiful.

Ferdinand joined his sisters in inquiries

quiries of her health; the modesty of her manners, with the artless sweetness of her language, made an indelible impression on the youth.

The horses were soon announced to be in readiness. Hildebrand had taken leave of his father, and hastened to join Ferdinand in the apartment of his sisters. A distressing interview ensued. Isabella prophetically feared the future would be less auspicious than the past, and in a flood of tears left her brothers.

Shortly after their departure, Isabella and Emmeline were summoned to attend the baron. Again they consigned Beatrice to Agnes, whilst with sorrowful countenances they obeyed his orders.

He

He was alone. Soon as he saw Isabella, he pressed her hand with a kindness she seldom had experienced. "I accede to your wishes; whatever may be the result of the insult offered your brother, the guiltless Beatrice shall find protection. Be it your care, my daughters, to make the castle a scene of pleasure; the present season demands hospitality; nor to your humanity shall I refuse whatever you may ask; your new guest I promise, by liberal donations, to make her forget her misfortunes."

Emmeline interrupted him, inquiring eagerly his meaning, and interceding for the preservation of the prisoner. The baron bade her be silent; to submit was the province
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of the child ; to command that of the parent.

Isabella waved the discourse ; she anticipated the pleasure of throwing open the gates, and cloathing the poor who entered ; of preparing wholesome food for the comfort of those hearts whom the approaching severe season would reduce to a bare pittance.

Such were the pleasures of the amiable daughters of Rowley. Resolved to enliven the walls of the castle, and judging by their own sensibility, concluded the rational delight of affording relief must contribute to the happiness of Beatrice, in whose interest they saw with pleasure their father take a decided part.

They

They felt how great an addition her society would be to them ; their domestic situation was by no means desired to be shared by the female young nobility and gentry who resided in their vicinity. The haughty conduct of the baron entirely precluded their own sex from repeating a visit ; and the frequent refusals he obliged them to make when invited, deterred all families of rank from seeking their acquaintance.

The evening was spent in conversation, in which each seemed under a restraint. The baron retired early to rest ; and Isabella and Emmeline, leaving Everard to his own gloomy meditations, hastened to Beatrice, to whom they immediately

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communicated the baron's resolution of affording her the protection of the castle; and added their fervent hope, a future acquaintance would increase the interest each seemed to feel in her favour.

Beatrice continued to excite their admiration by the energy of her replies; and tears of gratitude fell in torrents. She implored them, as the only means of restoring her lost happiness, to intercede for her father, without whose release the splendor they offered would but aggravate her distress.

Their answers were calculated to soothe her; they repeated the silence the baron had imposed on them, enforcing the necessity for the preservation

servation of her health, to allay the violence of her grief, and calm her agitation.

Recommended by her benefactresses, Beatrice retired to the chamber appointed; it opened on one side from the gallery; on the other to the apartment of the lady Emmeline, to which it usually served as an antichamber.

The sympathizing sisters continued, a few minutes after her departure, deliberating on the occurrences of the day, in which the conduct of their father excited their utmost astonishment. All endeavours to trace the cause they well knew must be ineffectual: to time, the great and sure discoverer of secrets,

they could alone hope an explanation.

They embraced, and withdrew to their respective chambers; where, after offering the prayers, instigated by fraternal affection, for the success of their brothers, they sought the aid of balmy sleep.

Beatrice, whose sorrows were too fresh to admit of forgetfulness, anxiously waited till the stillness which prevailed suggested a proper moment to steal from her bed, and attempt her romantic search. Her intention was to examine the doors of the lower part of the castle, not doubting, if any one was secured by a bar or bolt, that must surely be the prison of her father.

She

She left her couch, and throwing over her the loose garments which were placed in her room, secured in a handkerchief the food she had concealed; and taking up the lamp, whose feeble light promised certain aid, prepared to descend.

She paused a few moments at the door of her apartment; all was still, except the rapid vibration of her heart, impelled by contending hopes and fears.

The bolt easily gave way; but the incautious haste with which she shut the door extinguished the light, and for the first time suggested the dangers of her expedition.

Darkness carried with it no horrors; though Beatrice was the child

of poverty, she was not of vice ; her conscience, pure as the dew of heaven, raised no ideal fears ; no apprehensions of supernatural appearances had been infused in her young mind ; nor could any danger retard her endeavours to afford relief even to utter strangers ; she was not, therefore, intimidated at the extinction of her lamp, but trembled at the impediment to her search. Revolving in her mind the description given her by Agnes, she resolved, at least, to descend, and attentively listen, if she might by that means discern the language of distress.

She advanced, extending her hands to feel her own security.

A glimmering taper struck her eye ;

eye; the effect was too powerful for her reason; she sunk, alarmed, on the landing-place. At the same moment she heard her own name pronounced in a low but emphatic voice—she fainted.

When recollection returned, she perceived herself supported by the tender Emmeline.

This kind friend of Beatrice had been roused from her sleep by the closing of the door, when it escaped her hand; and suspecting it to be Beatrice, though far from guessing the occasion, she immediately followed, fearing a sudden indisposition had induced the fugitive to take so extraordinary a step.

Emmeline with difficulty prevailed

on Beatrice to return to her chamber, who for some time persevered in refusing to account for her intended descent. Overcome at length by entreaties, she yielded to her solicitations, and revealed the cause which actuated the unsuccessful attempt.

Emmeline could not doubt the truth of her assertions; the handkerchief, with its contents, were sufficient proof of her filial intentions.

Emmeline dwelt on the improbability of her succeeding; assured her there were various secret recesses in the castle, which she knew only by report. A circumstance in infancy had brought her acquainted with the key of one subterranean entrance,

entrance, where it was not improbable the father of Beatrice might be confined; as the servant whom she recollected to have seen come from thence, replied to her infantine questions, that he had been to secure a prisoner till the baron gave orders for his release.

Beatrice interrupted her; she threw herself on the floor, embraced, with a convulsive grasp, the trembling knees of her friend, who, overcome by the eloquence of her tears and entreaties, far from opposing, promised to hazard an attempt to secure the key (whose singularity could not be effaced from her memory, having frequently seen it, amongst many others, in the apartment de-

voted to the baron's retirement) by the following night, should the unfortunate peasant be still detained a prisoner.

Beatrice suggested the length of time which must elapse ere the revolving hours of night, fearing, should her father have been till then neglected, his situation might render her assistance useless.

Emmeline alleviated the excess of her fears. She remarked, the labours of a peasant inured him to hardship, and that he would be able to support a deprivation of food many hours, without the fatal event such a circumstance might occasion others.

Thus soothed, Beatrice consented

to

to return to bed, and court the influence of sleep, that, invigorated, she might support the exertions of the following night.

At early morn the daughters of the baron attended him at breakfast. He inquired of the health of their new guest; nor was he silenced in the energy of his expressions even by the malicious frowns of his son, whose countenance, at no time pleasing, had now depicted on it the savage contentions of his heart.

Lord Rowley expressed his regret of the paroxysms of grief with which he heard Beatrice was seized. He seemed irresolute; his favourite son was the accuser of the peasant. To examine the latter again, and, con-

trary to the wishes of his son, to liberate him, solely to relieve the anxiety of an object, for whom a casual resemblance to another inspired him with predilection, were contending passions that now rent his bosom.

Isabella and Emmeline passed the hours till dinner in their own apartment. Beatrice, whose hopes of liberating her father gave strength and eloquence, attended them; and to their request gave a short, but faithful, history of her misfortunes in these words.

“ My birth occasioned a loss of health to a tender mother, who, during the first twelve years of my existence, suffered a painful decay.

“ Myself

“ Myself and a favourite female were her constant companions. Assisted by us, she was daily enabled to rise; and to her perseverance in forming my young mind I owe whatever knowledge I have acquired. Oft would the tears of satisfaction bedew her faded cheek, when she exultingly observed the eagerness with which I received her instructions.

“ She would frequently charge, when death should take her from me, to fulfil the duties of a daughter, to recompense, by my assiduous affection, the obligations heaven forbade her the means of repaying. Forcibly would she warn me not to be deceived by ideal happiness, but
to

to trust to real bliss in submissive resignation to whatever might promote a father's ease.

" She would sometimes slightly mention her own history; but the subject was so distressing, I used every means of affectionate remonstrance to dissuade her from it.

" I have, however, reason to believe my fainted parent was of an illustrious family; her manner, her language, were so different to the honest rusticity of my father, as put it beyond a doubt; and the deference with which he always addressed my mother, convinces me of the truth, she was certainly in every thing, save affection to their Beatrice, his superior.

" The

“ The dawn of morn carried my father to the fields. Whole days sometimes elapsed without his visiting my mother, on whom, indeed, I never knew him intrude. I carried him the message which summoned him to her ; frequently, unexpected my arrival, I have surprised him in tears.

“ Sweet Beatrice !” he would exclaim, ‘ we shall lose your mother ; her resolute determination not to receive medical assistance must soon convince us how ignorant we are in administering to her disease.’

“ I used to sooth him with fond caresses ; with my hair I wiped his moistened eyes ; and using the pious expressions I had learnt from my mother, bade him not despair, but with
faith.

faith supplicate that power whose word could make her whole.

“ I was the companion of my mother during the night ; whilst Urfula, who never quitted her, occupied some clean straw on the ground beside us. Oft, when my parent thought I slept, have I heard, and, young though I was, joined in her fervent invocations, that in a future world our happiness might be purer than our present. Her expressions frequently astonished me ; they were far, far indeed, beyond my comprehension ; but, witness of her agitations, I thank the Creator of the Universe I never suffered my curiosity to occasion her a moment's pain by requesting an explanation.

“ I was not quite thirteen when
my

my father's prophetic fears were verified. The moment of losing her was at hand; a visible alteration in her looks decided Ursula to watch the night by her side; nor under such circumstances could I be prevailed on to lay down.

“ My mother expressed the certainty of a rapid termination of her sufferings, and wished the consolation of a priest; yet prevented our endeavours to procure one, by assurances ere he could arrive she should be no more.

“ She perceived the tears I could not restrain; she pressed my hands in her's, and bade me rejoice at the cessation of her sufferings: then raising her eyes towards heaven, ‘ ’tis there,’

there,' continued she, 'the secrets of all hearts will be opened; there in a mother's arms my child shall learn what only a mother can unfold.'

"Then untying this little relic (which, as Beatrice spoke, she showed was pending round her neck), and fastening it on me, charged me, whatever might be my necessities, to preserve it as dear as my life.

"After a short pause she called on Edward; so is my father named.

"I flew to the adjoining room, and found him in a state almost as lifeless as her's.

"At the sound of my voice he started: I repeated my mother's wish.

"He passed his hand across his eyes,

eyes, and assuming a composed countenance, followed.

“ Alas ! we found her without power to bid her last adieu ; she took him by the hand ; it spoke thanks ; she had not strength to utter.

“ My Beatrice ! ” she faintly articulated. I threw myself on the bed ; she expired.”

A flood of tears prevented Beatrice from continuing ; nor were her sympathetic auditors less affected. They had lost an affectionate mother ; and Isabella, who had attended her last moments, felt the description in all its force.

Emmeline desired Beatrice to go on, which, with a little hesitation, she complied.

“ Mis-

“ Misfortunes followed rapidly; in a few days after her burial I fell ill of a fever.

“ Scarce was I recovered from it, than our little cot was consumed by a cruel fire.—Oh! what a day did the dawn introduce. To aggravate our wretchedness, the faithful Ursula fell a victim to the flames.

“ We lived some distance from neighbours; nor had we familiar intercourse with any. We received no assistance, as we were totally unknown.

“ Deprived of every thing but what we could carry, we had to seek another habitation. Providence conducted us near the castle of Rowley. We obtained a clay-built hovel; and whilst my father earned our bread

bread by the labour of his hands, I did my utmost to amuse his evenings, and carefully housewife the little he procured.

“ Sometimes parental solicitude gave him acute pain ; he would exclaim, ‘ Gracious God ! how can Beatrice support these hardships ; will she not fall a victim ? ’

“ The lessons of my departed mother,’ I replied, ‘ are not thrown away ; she taught me, to murmur at the decrees of heaven was to sin. Let us, my father, cheerfully submit, and by a perfect resignation do our utmost to merit the protection of our Creator.’

“ Often would my anxious parent, with streaming eyes, bless me, as
the

the image of my mother; nay, sometimes a kind of distance in his affectionate expressions, such as was his usual manner towards her we had lost, surprised and distressed me.

“ Remarking the poverty of my dress, he proposed to part with a ring, the only token of regard my mother had given him a few days previous to her death, to procure comforts for his Beatrice. He willingly offered to make the sacrifice.

“ I remonstrated, I positively forbade such a contempt of her dying request; she gave it with a fervent blessing; it had once belonged to one dearer even than her child. I repeated what I had heard her say respecting it, and her injunction, that

that should I be the survivor, it might be consigned to me.

— My father listened to what I urged, and, falling on his knees, made a solemn vow never to part with it, till his last moments were at hand, when he would fulfil the wishes of the donor.

“ I heard him with satisfaction ; I preferred every misery to that of losing a relict of my mother’s.

“ The winter made rapid advances ; I forbore to complain.

“ I employed myself during the morning in searching for faggots, to cheer our long evenings. To these frequent rambles I owe the ragged state in which I entered the castle ; in vain I endeavoured to preserve a neat appearance ; my hands were
daily

daily employed in labour, which reduced me as you saw ; still I persevered to that fatal moment, when on my arrival at the cottage I found it deserted, and its confused state alarmed me.

“ I flew to the nearest hovel ; I enquired for Edward Sandford.

“ I learnt an incoherent account of the mystery ; but was assured of the truth of his having been dragged by force, at the will of Mr. Everard, to the castle.

“ You, amiable ladies, know the rest. Join with me, I entreat you, in prayers to that Power, in whose hands is the disposal of future events, that a father may be soon restored to his child.”

Isabella and Emmeline expressed
the

the interest they took in her artless relation; they promised, whatever might be the fate of her father, she would ever be the object of their solicitude. They repeated their desire to learn the cause of their brother's supposed insult; and Beatrice enforced the certainty of some great provocation to have induced her inoffensive parent to raise his hand against the son of the lord Rowley.

The sisters employed the remainder of the morning in embroidery, in which they both excelled; whilst Beatrice, from the assurances she had received from Emmeline, pleased herself with the idea of liberating her father, and planned the wildest projects.

E

Evening

Evening at length returned ; it seemed a long day which preceded. A satisfactory smile from Emmeline informed Beatrice she was in possession of the key, and induced her to propose retiring early, as if she could give speed to the hours which must elapse before the midnight bell sanctioned her impatient descent.

Emmeline, whose contending hopes and fears precluded all inclination to sleep, passed the time, from separating with Isabella, in the apartment with Beatrice. She informed her of the facility with which she obtained the key, which she had reason to suppose was never made use of but by the favourite and confidential

dential servant of her father, named Armstrong.

Her countenance indicated fear; she expatiated on the event of a discovery, and the courage requisite to explore dungeons unknown.

But nothing could waver the filial resolution of Beatrice.

She pressed the hand of her friend, and besought her only to point out the entrance, and leave the exploring it to her. "In a dear father's cause," added she, "no foolish fears will stay my purposes; I feel myself inspired; I see him extended on the ground, a prey to hunger; the arm of Heaven conducts his Beatrice; my hand will drop the cordial in his mouth; I see him revive; I save

him from the jaws of death; I hear him bless his child!"

Tears stood in her lovely eyes.

Emmeline was infected; she was pale, and trembled; whilst Beatrice, flushed with her certainty of success, looked, as she before suggested—inspired.

"Alas!" said Emmeline, "we must pass near my father's chamber."

"No matter," replied Beatrice, "who can hear our light footsteps."

"On either side him," continued Emmeline, "sleep his favourites, Armstrong and Luke, whose apartments are contiguous to his."

Beatrice did not want penetration; she perceived how useless would be the company of Emmeline, depressed
with

with a weight of fears. She urged her to remain, and give her the most accurate description of the situation of the fatal door ; to arrive at which, although many windings interfered, no impediment seemed so great as passing near the apartment of the baron.

Emmeline feebly persisted in accompanying her to the entrance, but yielded to the earnest refusal of Beatrice, who soon made herself, in theory, mistress of her way, and trusted in Heaven for success.

Fearless of every danger, she took leave of her agitated friend, beseeching her to continue in prayer till her return, which, added she, will not, I trust, exceed an hour.

Beatrice had not informed Emmeline of her intention of escaping with her father, but proposed really, what she now expressed, to take leave, previous to her departure.

Furnished with a lamp, food, and cordial, given by the sympathising Emmeline, she began her descent. She had convincing proof that the baron slept, and reached, by her own unerring recollection, the entrance pointed out.

The lock yielded easily to the key; no exertion of strength was necessary. Alas! thought she, its frequent use renders it thus easy. Oh God! thou knowest how many here have perished.

A second door presented itself.

At

At this sight Beatrice felt emotions, occasioned by the fears of not being able to proceed ; but they soon subsided. It was fastened by a bar of iron, the only one, though many seemed prepared for the same purpose, which lay on the ground.

To remove it required all the force which Beatrice possessed, and the execution of it proved her endowed with more than common power.

She now perceived a flight of steps, whose perpendicular construction might have alarmed a less dutious heart than that of Beatrice. She descended them, and stooped, attentively listening, in hopes of catching the sound of a human being.

Silence prevailed—in vain she
 looked

looked around her; she found herself in a narrow passage, whose termination her eye could not attain.

She proceeded for some minutes, then again paused—no noise was to be heard. She held up her lamp, and examining the roof, saw its stony arches, which time seemed unable to make impression on.

Still she proceeded, carefully examining on either side, in hopes some entrance might bless her hopes.

The space she traversed at length suggested some degree of mistrust of her friend. "Can she sport with misery?" thought she. "Can the lady Emmeline wantonly wound a breast distracted as that of Beatrice has been?" "Oh! Father of Mercy," exclaimed

claimed she, dropping involuntary on her knees, "relieve an anxious daughter!"

Then rising, she continued her steps, till she was interrupted by a separation of the passage into five distinct paths.

Here, indeed, she felt increasing distress.

"To where," thought she, "may these paths conduct me? perhaps that which might lead me to my father I may refuse, and that I take may carry me beyond the castle."

Bewildered in her ideas, and loth to return without a further search, was torture exceeding the rack.

She laid her hand on her breast, and, tracing the sacred sign of her

faith, followed the path which presented itself, opposite to the passage in which she stood.

Her route was soon interrupted; a door presented itself to her longing eyes; a slight bolt and bar, whose weight, compared to that which she had raised, were all which impeded her entrance.

Joy now possessed her. She eagerly removed the obstacles, and throwing open the door, and perceiving the glimmering of a feeble taper, exclaimed—"Oh, my father!"

A faint, yet hoarse voice, interrupted with convulsive struggles, replied—"Who calls a father? here lies a wretch who never knew that name."

Beatrice,

Beatrice, silent with amaze, could not articulate. She perceived a motion in a corner of the cell, from whence proceeded the voice.

She would have returned, but her feet denied their assistance.

"Where am I come!" she exclaimed.

"To close the eyes of a dying wretch," returned the voice, "who now feels the last chill pervade each vein."

As he spoke, the sufferer made an effort to raise his head; but unable to effect it, it returned to its stone pillow, and seemed no longer to possess the warmth the soul diffuses.

"Let me save thee!" cried Bea-
E 6
trice,

trice, with emotion; and springing forward, knelt by the expiring wretch, and administered a few drops of the restorative she held in her hand.

The conflicts of her mind were distracting; she was saving one, whilst at the same moment, perhaps, her father languished in equal want.

Her gentle treatment restored the parting spirit to its clay tenement.

Soon as she perceived signs of life, "fay," exclaimed she, "dost thou know where a daughter may to a father's wants administer relief!"

"Alas!" replied the re-animating sufferer, "excluded all human converse, shut from the blessings of Providence, a prey to misery, how can I answer thee? Daily is my
scanty

scanty morsel brought me. The situation to which I am reduced is rather owing to my want of fortitude to persevere in sustaining life, than loss of food. Three days has my portion remained untouched: I called on the name of the Most High; I implored his speedy deliverance; and whoso'er thou art, Heaven has conducted to lead me back to life, and prove a ministering angel."

"Alas! unhappy as thou art," answered Beatrice, "thou seest one beside thee not less wretched." She then in a few words related the object of her descent.

The prisoner could not assist her search, but his words alleviated her fears. He repeated the regularity
with

with which he was daily supplied with food, and dispelled her apprehensions.

Beatrice wept; the prisoner also shed tears, which in strong language depicted his internal sufferings.

"Ah! sweet pattern of filial piety," continued he, "thy tears will intercede with Heaven. Oh, envied father! secure in the affections of thy child, thou shalt defy the tortures of men.

"Yes, monster, yes! the hand of virtue shall at length avenge the cause of innocence."

His exertion to speak occasioned a faintness.

As he recovered, instead of answering her inquiries of his health,
he

he urged her to fly the castle ; but no persuasion could induce her to such a resolution, unaccompanied by her father. In vain he groaned out his fears for her preservation ; still she maintained her father's safety could alone direct a daughter.

She then inquired a short account of himself. He had not strength for the relation ; but added, " should pity for a wretched stranger excite your curiosity, and the will of Heaven extends a miserable existence, thou may'st indeed command the painful recital."

Beatrice repeated her anxiety to hear him ; and added, even hoped to have her stay at the castle prolonged, so much had the unexpected
aid

and she had afforded him interested her in his future fate.

Then, with admonitions of artless sanctity, urged him to preserve a life, which, notwithstanding its wretchedness, was the gift of an all-wise Creator, in whose hands alone rested the right of curtailing the sum of human woes.

She placed the phial under the folds of his rug, and with mutual blessings separated—

Then rebolted the door of the cell, and returned to the entrance of the passage where the different paths met.—

Here she paused—deliberating, whether to explore another recess, or to return.

After

After a few minutes she resolved on the latter.

Another dreadful object, yet not her father, might present itself, and already feared she had exceeded the time precaution pointed out.

The prisoner had relieved her dread of the famished state of her father by his own experience.

The enlargement of her parent occupied all her thoughts, and her active and duteous mind meditated a fresh attempt.

She, therefore, proceeded in haste to replace the heavy bar of the interior door; and locking the outer, for whose easy opening its daily use plainly accounted, then returned unmolested to her own apartment,
where

where she found the trembling Emmeline under the most painful anxiety for her long absence, which had exceeded, by an hour and a half, the proposed time.

They embraced with the genuine warmth of friendship and familiarity, that knew no difference of rank ; indeed there was a peculiarity in the address of Beatrice (even in rags), that at first introduction insured esteem.

She gave a faithful relation of the mysterious inhabitant of the subterraneous dwelling—her easy descent, and her fearless intrepidity, not omitting her earnest hopes to revisit the prisoner, and learn the history of his misfortunes. “ Who can resolve the

the secret purposes of Heaven," added she, " so singularly conducted, to snatch him from the grave? The Almighty may design me a further instrument in his deliverance."

She repeated her determination of imploring the baron for a second hearing of her father; resolved to use the language of a child in her parent's cause.

Emmeline sighed, and urged her to decline the attempt; described the authority with which her sister and herself had been commanded silence on behalf of the delinquent; and added her fears, lest the entreaties of Beatrice should be construed into disrespect, and rob her of that share of interest the baron had shown in her favour.

Beatrice

Beatrice was undaunted ; she resolved to brave danger ; and Emmeline, finding her arguments useless, bade her adieu for the remainder of the night.

She retired to her chamber : the anxiety of the preceding hours disordered her gentle frame, and robbed her of refreshing sleep.

Beatrice, on the contrary, satisfied with the part she had acted, resolved on the prosecution of her filial exertions, calmly reclined herself on the bed, and presently fell into a profound slumber, from which she was awoke by the sun darting its beams on her couch ; and, starting up, was convinced she had exceeded her usual hour of rising.

She

She entered the chamber of lady Emmeline ; it was deserted.

Advancing towards a window, which opened to a large court, perceived the occasion of her absence.

The lady Isabella had fixed on that day to dispense her liberal donations ; no one was refused admittance, no one returned empty.

Beatrice stood some moments contemplating the scene before her.

Large bowls of milk, accompanied with wholesome bread, were distributed to many. Others carried away cloathing ; others pieces of meat ; whilst all, in small quantities, was presented to each.

Beatrice could not command her tears ; they gushed involuntary from her eyes.

“ Oh,

“ Oh, my dear mother !” thought she, “ why didst thou deceive thy child ? why so often hast thou told her the happiness of the peasant exceeds the king’s ?—Ah, no ! can the joy of these poor wretches, made happy by the lady Isabella and Emmeline’s bounty, equal what they feel in dispensing it ? — Oh ! that riches were mine to share them with others !”

The wish was expressed aloud, as the amiable Emmeline entered the room.

“ I am come to chide you for your tardiness, sweet Beatrice.”

“ I crave your pardon,” said the weeping fair. “ In the dominion of sleep I was insensible of time.”

“ Let us descend,” replied Emmeline ;

meline ; “ the great hall is already filled with mothers and their little ones.”

“ And where is my father !” cried Beatrice, heaving a heart-rending sigh.

Emmeline was silent ; and Beatrice, accepting her arm, attended her down the great stairs.

As they reached the hall, they perceived the lady Isabella and Agnes distributing to each a gift.

“ My father,” whispered Emmeline.

The transient sight of him which Beatrice had taken could not guide her to point him out, had he been accompanied ; but here was no room to doubt.

Unmindful

Unmindful of the numerous groups who surrounded her, she precipitately left Emmeline, and throwing herself, in the posture of supplication, at the baron's knees, covering her face with her hands, was afraid to speak.

"Beatrice," said he, taking hold of her hand, as if to bid her rise—"what means this posture?"

"Oh! it says, my lord," exclaimed she, "that amidst this happy scene one child of affliction sues you for her father!"

"It must not be," replied the baron, putting his hand to his forehead; "whatever else, sweet girl, thou canst ask, shall be granted."

"Then," exclaimed she, wildly,
"since

“since he must die, for death will surely be his doom, here shall his child expend her latest breath—no, no, my lord, from hence no force, no prayers, shall make me move! I will, I will—”

The baron in vain endeavoured to raise her—she was immoveable—

Isabella and Emmeline supported her. “Oh, pray him for me!” exclaimed she. “Oh! think my lord, your daughters suing a powerful enemy for your deliverance—Oh, spare him—spare my father!”

“He shall be freed,” repeated the baron audibly. “Isabella, Emmeline, conduct the damsel to my apartment.” He immediately retired. She suffered them to lead her

to his room, and, coming again into his presence, would have repeated on her knees the effusions of a grateful heart.—The baron prevented her, and compelled her to be seated; then suggesting he had important information to communicate to Beatrice, desired his daughters to withdraw.

When alone with her, he spoke in these words:—“Inattentive to the accusation of my son, neglectful of the insult I have received in his person, the baron Rowley confesses his weakness, and to the prayers of a rustic grants what he refused his own daughters.—My word is passed—the peasant shall be freed; but these conditions ratify his freedom.

dom.—Here Beatrice must reside, as a pledge for the future conduct of the father. Speak angelic Beatrice, and o'er the baron Rowley thou shalt rule; and by the separation from thy fire, shalt insure him competence."

"Take me to him!" exclaimed Beatrice, "'tis he that must resolve; his future good alone shall be my care: who but a father can direct his child?"

The baron summoned Armstrong into his presence.—"Bring hither" said he, "the peasant whom thou hast in charge." "My lord!" exclaimed Armstrong. The baron repeated his orders. Armstrong took one of the keys suspended by

the wall; Beatrice turning her eyes towards them, perceived that which she had been possessor of stationary, "Alas!" thought she, "how fruitless had been my search had I examined each different avenue leading from the passage. Oh! my dear father, in a few moments you will hold your Beatrice in your arms."

The baron pressed her hand as Armstrong quitted the room; he urged her to a cheerful acquiescence to his proposal, describing the benefit attending her father, who should receive an annual salary, and owe to her the blessings he experienced.

Beatrice felt contending emotions; at one moment she was ready to accept the proposal with virtuous transport,

transport, then suddenly checked by the ardour of the baron's language, which intreated rather than commanded.

The absence of Armstrong began to render her uneasy; the flush of crimson, and the livid hue of death, alternately possessed her,—at length her fears were verified.

The inhuman gaoler abruptly entered, and, addressing the baron, exclaimed, “ My lord, the prisoner is dead !”

“ Dead !” repeated Beatrice : she heard no more, but sunk senseless down. He called aloud for Isabella and Emmeline. Agnes, alarmed by the voice of the baron, flew to his apartment, and learnt the cause of

the situation of Beatrice. By their assistance she was soon restored to recollection.

“ I pray, my lord,” said she, addressing him with difficulty, “ let me at least enjoy the satisfaction of embracing the cold remains of my injured parent; oh, deny me not in death what I have been deprived whilst living !” Then turning to Armstrong, her hands convulsively clasped together, besought him to conduct her.

Armstrong waited the decision of his lord, whom he had informed by whispers, that the situation of the peasant was such as to warrant his reporting him dead, though in fact he had not breathed his last.

The

The baron, finding her grief could know no abatement, till by its excess it was exhausted, ordered her to be conducted to the cell, and consented to the request of Emmeline to accompany her.

Beatrice, whose bosom thrilled by horror and grief for her father, was filled with fears lest he had perished by famine. When she approached the bed on which he lay, she gave a piercing shriek; she perceived the cloaths move; not able to restrain her emotion, threw herself on her knees beside the bed. The suffering Sandford raised his head; his countenance was distorted; his eyes fixed, could not perceive the object dearest to him.

“ Oh, my father !” cried Beatrice, taking his cold damp hand, “ this is indeed a cruel sight. Is this the meeting I solicited ? Is this thy freedom ? Bless, bless, your child ! ’tis your Beatrice herself that asks it.”

Sandford seemed to hear a voice, but could not answer. In vain she inquired the cause and progress of his disorder : all she could learn was, that he had been perfectly well the evening before, and had been found in the state he then was in the morning.—“ And has no one,” exclaimed Beatrice, “ allayed his parched tongue ? has no one tried to recompose his disordered brain ? Oh, my father ! how hast thou needed thy watchful Beatrice ? Oh God,

God, is it thus my dying mother's charge has been obeyed? Gracious Heaven!" — She endeavoured to make him swallow, but his tongue was too much swelled to admit it. Her tears fell in big drops down her cheeks, a convulsive endeavour to repeat the name of Beatrice was heard, a hollow groan followed, which terminated the sufferings of Sandford.

Beatrice would not be removed, she continued above an hour in silent prayer: perceiving all hopes of his reanimation vain, she gently wiped the disfigured features, pressing his shrivelled hands to her lips; and covering his face, was led by

Emmeline to her chamber, where she gave vent to her tears.

She continued in a state bordering on distraction till evening, when her spirits became composed. She had been put to bed, her sympathising friends were seated by her—inquired of them concerning the fate of her father—dwelt on his sudden death—begged his cloaths might be examined for the ring he always carried about him, lamenting the deprivation of his reason, which robbed her of the consolation of his blessing.

Isabella gave immediate orders to Agnes to have the ring searched for: she returned with a message from the priest, who, belonging to a neigh-

neighbouring priory, officiated as domestic chaplain in the castle, and who was in possession of the ring, which he had promised to deliver to Beatrice only. His admission was easily obtained. The good father approached her. "Save you my child?" said he. Beatrice eagerly demanded the valued token. He drew it from his bosom; she caught it from his hand; then, placing it on her finger, looked at it steadfastly. "Of whom, holy father," said Beatrice, "didst thou receive this ring? Thy looks speak comfort to me. Oh! thou sawest my poor suffering parent, and poured the balms of religion on his departing soul? Yet they informed me no one had minis-

tered unto him. Oh, speak ! relieve my doubts."

The priest assured her he had seen her father the preceding evening, who, feeling the approach of death, had implored his attendance. No sign of dissolution at that time appeared. " I bade him hope ; I was left with him alone ; he communicated to me his apprehensions" (here he looked around him, Beatrice understood the meaning, he could not impart the important secret) ; a few words implied much. The good Sandford told me he thought you was gone before him.

" The certainty of your living gave the most painful blow. I reasoned with him, he grew calm ; in
fine

fine, he intrusted me to give you the ring, and with it the prayers of a dying man.

“ I continued with him some time ; a stupor pervaded his senses ; I hoped this morning to have held further discourse,—alas ! all power of utterance was denied. I heard—but was refused admittance : I am again returned, and find he is released. Let us, my children, join in devout prayer for the repose of his soul”—he knelt. Isabella, Emmeline, and Agnes accompanied him, whilst Beatrice, restrained her tears, and audibly pronounced such sentences the holy father desired her to repeat.

These pious exercises restored the drooping fortitude of Beatrice ; she
longed

longed for a private interview with the priest, and resolved to effect it the earliest opportunity. With this determination she saw him depart, and, by a continuation of tranquil dejection, prevailed on her friends to relinquish their intention of passing the night in her chamber. Rest fled her eyelids. Tears supplied the place of Morpheus.

The lady Isabella, who, to relieve distress, had suppressed her feelings through the day, suffered repeated paroxysms of indisposition in the night, notwithstanding the entreaties of her faithful Agnes, who constantly slept in her apartment, she would by no means allow her sister to be summoned,

moned, fearing both to alarm her and disturb Beatrice.

At the request of the baron the family met at breakfast; nor was it easy to determine which most needed the soothing of friendship.

Emmeline alternately addressed her sister and Beatrice, whilst the baron, regardless of the faded cheek of his amiable daughter, had no eye but for the stranger, who, unconscious of the passion she had inspired, again solicited to visit the cell in which her father lay.

The baron replied by a look of acquiescence; his lips seemed restrained by the presence of his son, who sat in fullen silence.

Armstrong was summoned to attend;

tend; he recited the change which had suddenly taken place in the body of the deceased Sandford; the putrid state in which it was found at sun-rise had obliged them to inter it directly; although the shock which Beatrice received from this information threw her into an hystERIC fit, yet, on recovering, she felt relieved to think his trials were now changed to eternal bliss.

Beatrice declined appearing the remainder of the day in presence of the baron: in vain did Isabella and Emmeline report the expressions of tenderness their father used towards her;—they urged her to yield to their entreaties to consider the castle as her home. Beatrice would not
be

be persuaded, she knew her own abject situation: a secret impulse bade her restrain a decisive answer till she had asked and received the advice of the holy priest. She passed many hours in prayer; part of the western building of the castle was set apart for sacred purposes: thither often would Beatrice retire, and received from the offerings of her heart comforts religion only could inspire. So pure, so resigned a mind as Beatrice possessed, now felt a wish to lead a monastic life: deprived of those nature taught her to consider as most dear, retirement was her cherished tenet.

On the following day she summoned resolution to meet the baron.

His

His particular deportment towards her covered her with confusion: his haughty air, and natural austere features, could not be softened, even by love.

An involuntary tremor seized Beatrice whenever he addressed her; she knew not the cause of her fear, but was alarmed in his presence.—

The severity of the season prevented her visiting the good priest; and when at the castle he was too much engaged to devote any time to her; she therefore waited with anxious expectation a favourable change of weather; the inclement blasts from the north, accompanied by large falls of snow, precluded all possibility of stirring out.

In

In the midst of a fervent supplication in the chapel, she was interrupted by the appearance of the baron. She rose hastily to retire. He caught her in his arms.—“ My Beatrice !” exclaimed he, “ why fly from him who offers you wealth and happiness ? Here shalt thou reign, mistress of Rowley—what wouldst thou more ? My servants at thy command, nay e’en my children shall obey thy will.”

Beatrice, who was prevented quitting the chapel from the interposition of the baron, had disengaged herself from his strenuous embrace, supporting herself against one of the pillars, was compelled to hear all he had to say : as he paused, she replied with modest diffidence—“ Alas ! my lord,

lord, the wretched Beatrice wants words to speak in proper language—the various subjects which engross her breast—silence best becomes the greater part. But, oh, my lord! do not add to the distresses which I bear by proposals which wound me.”

“What!” cried the baron, “to raise a peasant to be mistress here! Away with such ideal virtue. By Heaven, you shall be mine!” He attempted to seize her; she eluded his grasp, and, leaving him to his own reflections, was in a few moments in the apartment with Emmeline.

Beatrice was visibly affected; her friend endeavoured to learn the cause. Unwilling to excite in the bosom of his child impressions prejudicial to the
duty

duty owed a parent, Beatrice restrained the invectives with which her soul was replete. The conduct of the baron pointed the impropriety of her remaining at the castle; and, notwithstanding the imminent danger with which such an attempt must have been attended, would have immediately left it, but for the recollection of the wretched prisoner in the cell, whose situation was ever present to her imagination.

An unusual languor had for some time oppressed her; in vain the soothing Emmeline endeavoured to dissipate its influence. Beatrice gently pressed the hand of her friend.—“A vow has passed my lips,” said she, “and on you, my friend, its success depends.”

“ On

"On me!" exclaimed Emmeline.
 "Absorbed in my own sorrow," continued Beatrice, "I have appeared to forget the dying prisoner. You, my friend, proposed to accompany me; let us repair to his dungeon this night. Say, will my friend refuse again to trust me with the key?"

Emmeline smiled consent—not only sympathised in her wishes, and promised to procure the key, but also declared her resolution to accompany her; the late descent having dissipated fears the idea of exploring subterraneous caverns excited.

Emmeline finding Beatrice continued determined not to return to the family for the evening, left her to prepare a few requisites for their intended visit, and afterwards joined

the

the baron, Everard, and Isabella, to whom she communicated the indisposition of her friend.

The baron traversed the apartment in deep contemplation. He retired to his chamber at an early hour. His family did the same.

Emmeline, who had provided herself with the key, entered the apartment of Beatrice with a satisfied air. She returned her smile.

"I perceive," said Beatrice, "Heaven is propitious."

"Yes," replied Emmeline, "here is food."

"And here," continued Beatrice, "are two hearts, who, in the performance of a charitable action, feel inspiration."

"Shall

"Shall we descend?"—Emmeline repeated it was not yet midnight, and advised remaining a short time longer.

After a sufficient stay, Beatrice took the lamp and key, and led the way. Emmeline, betraying a slight degree of fear, followed.

Beatrice unappalled, when alone, was now capable of animating her timid friend, whose fears suggested a discovery would ensue.

To Beatrice the passage appeared much shorter than on her former visit; to Emmeline its length infinitely exceeded what fancy had figured. They at length safely reached the cell.

The voice which saluted their ears Beatrice immediately recognised.

She

She approached the prisoner, who, with transport, blessed the hands which, by a providential interference, not only revived his expiring spirit, but, by lessons of piety, taught him to endeavour to prolong a life, which, however painful it had been rendered by captivity, was impious in mortals to destroy.

“Amiable child! may’st thou never know the want of such assistance as thou hast rendered me!”

Beatrice interrupted him—tears had till then prevented her speaking. She gave into his hand a powerful cordial, and a supply of wholesome victuals, which his shrivelled hands carefully concealed amidst his knotted mattrass.

Beatrice introduced Emmeline.—

“Thy sufferings have found a friend in the youngest daughter of the baron Rowley; the lady Emmeline vouchsafes to cheer thy melancholy gloom.”

The prisoner had only perceived Beatrice, who was nearest to him. His feeble eyes were too dimmed to see any object but what was brought close.

On hearing the daughter of his cruel oppressor was beside him, a convulsive emotion seized him; he was for some minutes insensible. The sighs he heaved seemed to rend his heart. Emmeline and Beatrice were alarmed.

By degrees he recovered. Bea-
trice

trice calmed his terrors, and painted the amiable disposition of her friend in proper language. The sufferer, in faltering accents, implored pardon for the weakness he had betrayed in doubting her noble disposition. "Oh!" continued he, "the tender heart which instigated you to visit a wretch's dungeon will plead my cause. See, lady, the victim of your father's cruelty! Years have rolled over years; I even know not the length of my captivity; a fether's galling wound has long deprived me of the power of rising."

"What!" interrupted Beatrice, "infirm as thou art, does a fether bind thee down?"

He replied, "The wound it made

pleaded in my favour. My gaoler for a while suspended my chains; but soon as the flesh concealed the bones, an irritating iron again tormented me. Yet what avails the sufferings I feel? If aught can alleviate them, 'twill be to hear you have found grace in the sight of the baron. What knowest thou of thy father?"

Beatrice gave him the sad recital of what had befallen, and concluded by a repetition of the offer the baron made her to continue at the castle.

Scarce did the prisoner suffer her to conclude the sentence, when hastily he exclaimed—"Fly, fly these hated walls! Contagion hangs on the lips
of

of Rowley; his specious charity is but to ensnare; a moment may be too late."

Emmeline conjured him to think less harshly of her father; and reminded him of the promise he had made Beatrice to recite the cause of his long imprisonment.

"Alas!" replied he, "thou art a daughter, and 'twill pain thy gentle bosom to attend a recital of the crimes with which I charge thy father. The wretched state to which I am reduced is sweet humanity compared to——"

"To what!" exclaimed Beatrice. "Tell me, why so strongly thou urgest me to quit this asylum?"

Emmeline was silent. After the

suggestions of the prisoner, she could not bid him proceed, whilst curiosity prompted her to hear the narration.

Beatrice continuing to request his history, in these words he began.

“ However great have been my trials, I will be brief in disclosing them. I was born and bred in affluence; I visited foreign courts; I signalised myself in arms; I received in Paris the inestimable jewel, whose possession I fondly hoped would insure the happiness of my life—the lady Anna, daughter of an English nobleman, who, with her family, were on a visit to the duke de C—. The duke, and the father of my Anna, endeavoured to promote an alliance with their children. The
young

young nobleman was her aversion; she was destined to become my bride. She left her family, preferring domestic bliss to all the grandeurs of a court. I made my happiness consist in promoting her's.

"We returned to our native country. I engaged a small mansion, adjacent to the castle of Evelyn, inhabited by a noble lord, an ancient friend of my family.

"Compelled to leave my beautiful wife to visit my paternal estate, which I had relinquished for a certain time to a relation, its situation rendering it detestable to my wife, who feared it might excite the revengeful arms of her own family.

"My absence was lengthened be-

yond the time proposed. According to my desire, the third day after my departure a messenger was dispatched by my wife. He brought me the pleasing intelligence of her health, and the kind attentions she received from our friends at the castle.

“ By the second messenger I received the former part of the intelligence, with an earnest desire of my return. I gave the reason for the necessity of my stay; adding, a few days at the present moment would prevent an obligation to repeat my visit.

“ Alas! the third messenger arrived. I learnt my lovely Anna had been insulted by a guest of the lord Evelyn's,

Evelyn's, and urged my immediate return.

“ All was prepared for my departure ; had it been otherwise, such a summons would have annihilated every other consideration. I took a hasty leave of my relation, mounted my horse, and travelled incessantly till I reached our home. It was deserted—robbed of its purest ornament, it became a wild.

“ I called for its mistress. My servants were ignorant where she was gone ; her woman had accompanied her. I went instantly to the castle. A veteran in the service of his mistress's family, who had quitted it to attend my Anna, advanced towards me, desired a moment's hearing, informed

formed me he had been left with orders to conduct me to his mistress, and had horses ready.

“ The fatigue of body I had experienced was no impediment; I asked no further questions; I vaulted in the saddle, and with utmost speed pursued our way.

“ I rested not till I embraced my wife; her cheek, on which I had been accustomed to see rosy health, was covered with a sickly paleness.

“ I now learnt the cause of her hasty departure. The baron, lord Rowley, had prophaned her chaste ears with an avowal of love. He in vain essayed the glossy snares for seduction. Inflamed by the passion her innocence, her beauty, had kindled,

dled, he proceeded to menaces, and vowed destruction on us both.

" A moment to escape presented itself. My wife, and her faithful attendant, set off, and leaving with Walter directions to follow, waited at the place appointed till my arrival.

" Mad with rage and revenge, I execrated the monster. My trembling Anna pressed me to yield to her entreaties to seek some sequestered place, where no impious eye should dare molest her.

" I represented the impossibility of her safety, should the offender remain unpunished. I recalled to her memory the opprobrious name of coward, with which the villain would brand her husband, should I tamely submit.

" This succeeded. She consented to my leaving her at the cottage, where she received from the honest inhabitants the kindest attentions; whilst I returned, determined to be guided by the baron, lord Evelyn, in the atonement I should require from Rowley.

" The parting with my lovely wife was more painful than words can describe. We met no more.

" I cannot proceed"—He paused for a few minutes, then proceeded.

" I met the baron on the road. He had learnt the flight of my Anna, and was in pursuit of her, attended by a party of horsemen. I was followed by Walter.

" The sight of the baron inflamed me with passion. I threw off my cloak,

cloak, in which I was wrapped, and drew a short sword.

“ Imprudent was my rage. Numbers o’erpowered me ; I was wounded, disarmed, and saw my faithful servant lying bleeding on the earth. I was bound, and hither brought. Sometimes my fever got the better of my reason. Alas ! I fear my own incoherencies betrayed the retirement of my Anna.

“ The inhuman gaoler who, by his master’s orders, conveyed me here, and has daily attended me, gave me the account of the success of a stratagem in obtaining my wife. Yes, she had been brought to this castle, but the arm of Heaven had claimed its own, and torn her from the impious touch of the tyrant.

“ I heard

“ I heard the news that she had breathed her last. My gaoler, with malicious smiles, bade me feed upon his welcome words ; and from that hour has he persevered in contemptuous silence. In vain I prayed. A day of retribution will come, the secrets of all hearts shall be opened, and the joys of a world to come shall recompense the miseries of this——”

He ceased. The latter part of his relation had been uttered with visible difficulty. His resolution, however, supported him to its conclusion.

His attentive auditors were much affected ; whilst Emmeline supported his head. The wretched prisoner recovered ; he grasped the
hand

hand of Beatrice in an agony, his eyes fixed; his countenance had an air of wildness, which alarmed them.

Some moments of silence ensued. "Heavens!" he exclaimed, in a voice interrupted by convulsive spasms, "does not my feeble sight deceive me?" Beatrice and Emmeline, concluding from his exclamation, his agitated fancy portrayed some illusion, besought him to compose himself; but, inattentive to their solicitations, he continued.

"Pardon, thou child of sorrow, the wild suggestions of a wretched old man, whom either memory and sight have both forsook, or to my wondering senses is restored a contemplation of a ring I gave my Anna at our separation."

As

As he spoke, he drew from the finger of Beatrice the ring consigned her by the priest, which she had immediately placed on her own hand.

The stranger considered it attentively.—It is—it is—the same!—Say! are not those my own initials?

Beatrice was too much agitated to speak, but Emmeline easily distinguished the cypher of H. N. “The same, the very same, I am Horatio Neville!” endeavouring to raise his head, which returned to its hard pillow—“Oh God! if my disordered suggestions should be realised! I conjure thee, tell me how thou camest possessed of this ring.”

Beatrice was incapable of answering—

ing: ideas almost improbable occupied her thoughts.

Emmeline, who had lately heard her history, communicated it in as few words possible, concluding by saying, "Edward Sandford deposited the ring with the priest, who resigned it to Beatrice."

"Sandford!" cried the agonised Neville, "these are precious moments, hasten to relieve me—nature pleads,—all, all convinces me! thou Beatrice art my child; the name thou bearest was that of my valued mother; it was my wish, if a daughter was given to my prayers, that so she should be called."

He endeavoured to embrace Beatrice;

trice: his hands refused — she fell senseless by his side.

Emmeline had now indeed a trial for her resolution; her exertions triumphed, and the lovely Beatrice rendered the discovery certain, by producing the agate reliet which was tied round her neck by her expiring mother.

Neville instantly recognised it: the conduct of her suffering parent was no longer a mystery; assuming the name of Sandford she prevented the possibility of a discovery: the respect shown by him clearly proved his consciousness of superior rank; all that appeared unanswerable to Neville was the circumstance his gaoler had

had acquainted him with, of the death of his wife.

The discerning Beatrice reconciled the seeming mystery—her mother had assuredly escaped with her faithful Ursula—Neville knew the name. He had not attended to the circumstance of her falling a victim to the flames, and now heard it with deep concern.

The years passed in prison, in his ideas, had doubled their real term: the date of that in which he was first confined agreed with the birth of Beatrice, nor did there arise any circumstance to render the interesting discovery doubtful.

Emmeline now interrupted the affecting conversation; prudence dictated

dictated her to urge a cessation for the present, offering on a future night to accompany Beatrice in her visit.

Neville felt as a father; his thoughts rested on the safety of his child. He bade her fly the castle: suggestions which crowded on his brain could fix on no plan for his liberation; and in the hope that Beatrice might escape the snares of the tyrant and his son centered all his wishes. "Hear my vow," exclaimed she, dropping on her knees, "to effect your deliverance!"—"Hold," cried Neville, "nor dare to breathe a vow: the Power Supreme, who led thee here, will still direct thy actions—Go, be virtuous!"

Emmeline

Emmeline and Beatrice having adjusted the cell, no trace remained of interrupted horrors. Different were the impressions with which the the young adventurers returned. They had indeed exceeded the time proposed ; but, throwing themselves on their beds, avoided all suspicion : sleep was banished from their lids.

Beatrice, employed in ideal schemes of liberating her father, felt new vigour animate each nerve.

Emmeline lamented the cruelty of him to whom she owed her existence ; a thousand suggestions arose in her bosom. To decline assistance to Beatrice was to stay her hand in an action Heaven must approve ; yet how reconcile herself to open the
prison

prison door to one who might seize the earliest moment in plunging a dagger in the breast of her father. These conflicting passions distracted her. Soon as the family occupations permitted, with a heavy heart she replaced the key in the private apartment of the baron.

Beatrice, who, during the interview with her father, avoided mentioning the latter conduct of lord Rowley, now gave it serious reflection: she feigned herself too much indisposed to leave her chamber, fearing a second meeting with the baron might oblige her to quit the castle before her project was ripe for execution.

The lady Isabella evinced the tenderness of her disposition; she saw,
with

with concern, the alteration an uneasy mind made on the lovely countenance of Emmeline, and essayed her skill to trace the cause.

Emmeline condemned herself for having yielded to the entreaties of Beatrice, and could not summon sufficient resolution to disclose her anxiety to her sister. Isabella was not insensible to the perturbed state of the baron; her feeling bosom could not see his agitation without lamenting it. He desired her presence.—“Has not Beatrice need of help?” was his first exclamation. In reply to her filial inquiries, he suggested attention to the object which alone engrossed his thoughts.

Towards evening, finding Bea-
trice

trice persevered in avoiding him, he could not conceal his uneasiness; and, resolving on an interview with her, defied the opinion of his son. Blinded by passion, he considered not the possibility of a refusal, and assured himself to make the offer of his hand was to succeed.

He then declared to his daughter Isabella his intention of visiting her guest.

Isabella heard him; and, supposing he had still further to add, waited his commands.

The baron repeated his former words, ordering her to intimate to Beatrice his proposed visit.

Isabella immediately communicated her father's message.

Beatrice

Beatrice entreated some excuse might be framed to avoid the dreaded interview: Isabella, ignorant of the cause of her terror, urged compliance to her father's wish.

Beatrice yielded, on her promise of not leaving the apartment during the baron's stay. They repaired to the room allotted the ladies, and in a few moments the baron entered. With a tenderness unusual, he inquired her state of health, repeating, in the earnest language of a lover, the anxiety her indisposition had caused.

Beatrice replied with respect; her blushes, as she spoke, contributed to enhance her beauty in the eyes of the baron.

H

Perceiving

Perceiving the lady Isabella made no motion to withdraw, after some hesitation, he desired a short conversation with Beatrice in private. The lovely trembler answered, "no subject he proposed to communicate need be concealed from his amiable daughter, to whom she was ready to lay open every recess of her heart."

The baron replied, "what he had to propose would be speedily concluded; soon as he received her answers, he should raise no objections to its publicity:" then looking sternly at the lady Isabella, she withdrew."

The baron seizing the hand of Beatrice, which she endeavoured to avoid, made an open avowal of his passion, invoked

invoked Heaven to witness his sincerity, his love ; and expressed the tenderness of those sentiments she had excited in his breast on her first appearance. He then engaged himself, by solemn promises, to repair the loss she sustained in a father by an union with her, an event on which he founded his own hopes of future happiness ; and from poverty, raise her to power, rank, and fortune.

Beatrice, overwhelmed with confusion, endeavoured, but could not answer. He proceeded : " Speak loveliest of women, one word confirms my wishes ; our holy father, who has absented himself on a religious penance, will return in a few days : say, shall that moment make

— Beatrice my wife? ” With a faltering voice, she replied, “ Cease, my lord, to urge me further on this subject; my refusal may excite your resentment: the daughter of the peasant Sandford cannot become the ”——

“ Hold ! ” interrupted the baron, gazing stedfastly on her, and increasing her crimson glow; “ your refusal, Beatrice, I rather impute to a desire of being further solicited, than a determination to refuse the high honours I offer: satiate then yourself with the sight of the baron Rowley prostrating himself at your feet, and entreating the hand—the hand of a destitute orphan, his rank and power entitle him to command.”

His

His countenance testified the haughtiness of his mind; the tenderness which overspread his features on his entrance was succeeded by a fierceness which did not fail to alarm Beatrice. Her cheek became pale: lord Rowley paced the room in emotion, then in a few minutes repeated his entreaties.

Beatrice besought him to desist; she represented the disgrace so mean an alliance would entail on his family, and concluded by saying, "death would be preferable to perpetual bondage." Perceiving her inflexible, his anger was kindled, he could not restrain expressions of indignation and menace.

Beatrice was silent; he hastily
 H 3 quitted

quitted her, and retired to his own apartment, where, in a state of distraction, he summoned the immediate attendance of his children.

Surprised at the command, they instantly obeyed, and found him no longer master of himself. Desiring their entire attention, without any preface to the subject, he informed them, the perfect resemblance he had at first sight discovered in Beatrice to one whom he had fondly loved, and struck by her fascinating appearance, "confessed he had been induced to offer her protection in the castle; from pity he felt sentiments of a tender passion, and described the interview which had just taken place:" and continued,
"I swear

"I swear either the stubborn Beatrice shall accede to my will, or feel my utmost revenge. 'Tis to this purpose I submit to ask your assistance: devise, I conjure you, some means to relieve me from the depression I experience."

Isabella and Emmeline looked confusedly at each other. The circumstance on which their opinion was required was of such a nature as precluded their power of utterance. Silence ensued, when their attention was suddenly fixed on Mr. Everard, who, in language well-adapted to please his father, offered to be his mediator with the fair Beatrice, alleging, that possibly the warmth of the baron might have

perverted the arguments most certain to captivate an uninstructed heart ; and added, " the coolness of your son, my lord, will, I trust, prove more successful for his father than himself has been."

The baron, almost despairing, and ready to adopt any appearance of succeeding, was instantly wrought on by Everard ; and agreeing to his proposal of an immediate interview with Beatrice, desired his daughters to continue with him till their brother's return.

Everard smiled assent and retired, fully resolved how to perform the part he had undertaken. His brooding malice had not been unemployed during the abode of Beatrice

trix at the castle ; he had meditated and resolved her ruin : the present offered so gratifying an experiment, he instantly embraced the attempt. " What," thought the designing hypocrite, as he traversed the gallery leading to her apartment, " shall the daughter of a peasant, who scorning to yield her to my gold—shall she be sued for the wife of my father ? Forbid it, genius of revenge, thou solace of my loaded breast ; I will bask in thy warmth, and glut myself with thy inventions."

Inflamed with these diabolical sentiments, he surprised Beatrice on her knees, imploring preservation from future trials, or fortitude to resist them.

She rose hastily on hearing Everard enter. His features wore the appearance of commiseration, they dissipated the horror he usually inspired her with.

"Amiable Beatrice!" (he made a motion for her to be seated, then drew a chair beside her) "thy sufferings have softened a heart, whose obduracy has hitherto resisted every tender impression—Behold your protector!"

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed, Beatrice, "What means this visit? Relieve me, I conjure you, from the torture of suspense."

"Compose yourself, loveliest of your sex," replied Everard; "however subtle may be the projects of
my

my father, my endeavours shall render his schemes abortive."

"Lord Rowley's schemes!" repeated Beatrice. "Does he indeed descend to ensnare the child of misery? Oh God!" continued she, raising her hands, "shall meditated force or artifice bring me to compliance? No! the hand of the captive shall give her liberty, and break the fetters man cannot unite."

"Hush!" interrupted the wily serpent. "Does the pious Beatrice breathe such thoughts? does she, at the moment of supplication, meditate the irretrievable blow?"

"Cease!" exclaimed she wildly. "I know not how to act. If humanity has induced this visit, in-

struct me to quit a roof where every minute's stay increases danger."

"I will," replied Everard: "if ought of wrong has ever stained my youth, the preservation of your innocence shall obliterate my guilt. Know then, thou lovely sufferer, my father's plan, if not foiled before to-morrow, will not leave you mistress of yourself."

"I will this moment fly!" cried Beatrice.—"Softly," interrupted Everard, "nor by a hasty proceeding relinquish the success of my scheme: confide in my honour, this night shall place you in security. Soon as the midnight-bell has sounded, I will strike thrice on your door; that moment
every

every thing shall be prepared, and in some holy sanctuary my hand shall place you."

"Be it so!" cried Beatrice with impatience. "Preserve me innocent, and the blessings of an upright heart shall prove a high reward."

"Be circumspect and silent," continued Everard: "should'st thou see my sisters, I counsel thee to avoid communicating what has past."

Beatrice assented to what he suggested; then repeating the necessity of an immediate answer to his third signal, he quitted her apartment: she once more resumed prayers for her preservation.

Everard, whose satisfaction enlivened his natural ferocious aspect,

hastened

hastened to his father, fraught with more than common probability of making the baron's hand the instrument of destroying his hoped-for bride.

"Speak!" cried lord Rowley; "have your entreaties subdued the obstinacy of the rustic."

"I have much to communicate, my lord," replied Everard: "to your private ear I dare alone repeat the past."

The ladies, Isabella and Emmeline, arose to withdraw.

Everard detained them: turning to the baron, "My lord," said he, "so wondrous is the nature of my secret, you, with parental authority, must enforce, ere my sisters quit
your

your presence, that they appear not in the company of Beatrice till the morrow's dawn: a few moments, my lord, will justify my precaution."

"I charge you," cried the baron, "to retire to your own apartments, and avoid Beatrice."

However uneasy this command made them, their submissive looks signified obedience: they retired, reasoning on the singular request of their brother, and the arbitrary conduct of their father.

Scarce were they departed, when the baron exclaimed, "Haste, my son, to explain thy interview!"

"Prepare yourself, my lord," replied the fallacious monster, "to hear truths, which, whilst they wound
wound

wound your heart, will teach you to overcome a passion fatal to your peace. To me was given to know the character of the designing beauty: the fervour of your affection, my lord, had rendered you blind; her seeming innocence secured her specious purposes, and had you not, by a providential discovery, confided the important secret to me, the despised of the son had conquered the pride of his father."

"What do I hear!" exclaimed the baron. "Can the lips of Beatrice utter falsehood?"

"Yes," replied Everard, "they can, they have: the peasant whom I brought before you, with his own consent, offered Beatrice to my arms
for

for a sum of money. Though seduced by her beauty, I yet proffered him an abatement of the sum, which still I regarded as more than equal her value: enraged, the villain dared to lift his hand against me."

"Proceed," said the baron.

"Beatrice," continued Everard, "possessed of such deep duplicity a courtier scarce could equal, gained admission to your presence; prudence guarded me from her allurements: in vain she practised her captivating arts; I feigned not to observe them, I avoided any interview unaccompanied by one or both my sisters; still I had continued silent, perceiving you, an advocate in her favour; but honoured by
your

your confidence of most important moment, a farther silence had rendered me criminal.

Resolved, with your permission, to obtain an interview, and try the extent of those virtues for which you have admired her, this night my father may receive the proof."

"This night!" interrupted the baron; "what of this night?"

"Soon," replied Everard, "as the midnight-bell warns us the hour of secrecy and sleep, Beatrice, the filial, the immaculate, will attend my signal, and give herself to my arms."

"Infernal woman!" exclaimed the baron, "for the wanton embraces of my son hast thou refused my

my marriage-bed—vile fiend! detested dissembler!”

“Compose yourself, my lord,” interrupted Everard: “revenge, far sweeter than guilty pleasures can bestow, shall alone gratify your son: you, my lord, make the signal, and” —“And,” exclaimed the baron, in a voice of thunder, “be it mine to plunge a dagger in her breast! and by her impious blood atonement make”——

“What,” replied Everard, “can my father resist her fascinating eloquence? can he, however strong her guilt may arise, draw forth that blood which some few minutes past he had shed his own to save?”

“Hear me, Everard,” said the baron:

baron : “ should her countenance wear the innocence of angels ; should her eloquence exceed the syren’s power ; nought should stay my vengeance : by Heaven, the artful hypocrite shall not escape my steel !— this night she dies ! ”

Everard, who pleased himself with the rage to which his villainy had raised the baron, resolved not to leave him to reflection, lest, in an unguarded moment, love might instill a softer sentiment, and crush his bloody well-planned scheme.

Whilst he continued with the baron, preserving alive the consuming fire of jealousy, the innocent Beatrice was performing a far different part : she returned to prayer, she wept ; the horror

ror of her situation struck her in its blackest light.

What, to avoid the stratagems of the baron, was she to trust the son? The last words she heard pronounced by Edward Sandford now occurred.

It must be so, thought she (considering a few moments); yes, he rejoiced Beatrice had by death avoided the snares prepared for her; perhaps the monster now congratulates himself on his approaching success. "Oh thou, my Creator!" cried she, clasping her hands, "preserve the humblest of thy creatures! do thou conduct her through accumulated horrors!"

She paused,—the remembrance of her imprisoned father darted its influence

ence on her senses, and hurried her almost to distraction.

As she recovered her spirits, she remained in anxious expectation of the entrance of her sympathising friends ; their absence distressed her : as night advanced she ventured to the apartment of the lady Isabella, and surprised them in visible agitation.

The coolness with which they received her was a severe shock ; she threw her arms round Emmeline, and, in the language of innocence, inquired the cause of their altered conduct.

Isabella and Emmeline assured her of their perfect attachment ; but Beatrice easily perceived the restraint under which they laboured : she gave them a faithful recital of the
scenes

scenes in which she had been engaged with the baron and their brother; concluding, by her determination not to accept the proffered protection of the latter.

The lady Isabella heard, but dared not answer. Emmeline suppressed her tears and spoke: "Thou art, indeed, sweet Beatrice, beset with dangers: still persevere, innocence will be thy guard.—Is it possible! my brother"—

She checked herself; the discerning Beatrice did not pass her words unnoticed. She enforced fresh entreaties; and at last prevailed on Emmeline to repeat the conference the baron had held with them, and of the offer of Everard to mediate for

for his father, last mentioning the silence he had enjoined them.

The countenance of Beatrice spoke the various emotions of her mind—

“ I will go and throw myself at the the baron's feet, I will implore his mercy, and inform him of the treachery of his son.”

The trembling Isabella detained her; she painted, in forcible colours, their own situation, under their father's displeasure, in consequence of disobeying his commands.

Isabella's remonstrance was sufficient, “ Instruct me, then,” cried Beatrice, “ how am I to extricate myself from the engagement I have entered into?”

Isabella

Isabella and Emmeline agreed in opinion, she should answer the signal made by their brother, and then, by a resolute refusal of his protection, frustrate his plans.

Beatrice, persuaded of the justness of their advice, hesitated not, yet expressed dread of meeting Everard.

Isabella and Emmeline would have stayed with her, but the commands of their father awed them: they dared not incur his wrath, yet they promised to remain in the apartment of Lady Emmeline, which communicated with that of Beatrice; when, immediately as their brother retired, they would return and soothe her agitated spirits.

The internal conflicts she sustained almost exhausted her strength: they prevailed on her to lay down.

In a short time, they withdrew to the chamber of Emmeline, and waited the hour of midnight with anxiety.

The bell sounded—a convulsive motion shook the tender frame of Beatrice—a prophetic dread possessed her. Far different the sensations, when alone she explored subterraneous caverns.

Her suspense was not of long continuance—three hurried signals vibrated on her ear.

Beatrice with faltering steps advanced, and, trembling, opened the door,

door—in the instant received the baron's pointed dagger.

Her shriek and fall brought Isabella and Emmeline.

Terror prevented their giving assistance.

On the floor lay the bleeding Beatrice.

With his sword still reeking stood the baron; his features were distorted, and his uplifted arm expressed the intention to repeat the blow.

Everard darted a look of horror on his terrified sisters, who, appalled with the unexpected scene, dared not arrest their father's hand, nor relieve their senseless friend.

The baron, not perceiving any
 1 2 motion

motion in Beatrice, raised his eyes towards his daughters, and demanded the cause of their appearance.

The accent of his voice, more terrific than they had yet heard, wholly prevented Isabella the power of utterance: she returned him a look of dismay, and sunk by the side of Beatrice.

Emmeline's agitation was not concealed: she knelt by the side of her sister; and, supporting her head, besought the baron to permit assistance to be summoned.

"First," exclaimed he vociferously, "I will know how thou camest from thy bed at this late hour?—Answer me!"

Emme-

Emmeline, raising Isabella, not silenced by the frequent interruptions of Everard, briefly related the account received from Beatrice, and her resolution rather to rely on the honour of the baron than of his son: she concluded, by describing the agitated situation of her friend, which determined them to remain in the adjoining apartment, to afford assistance, should it be required.

As she concluded, the baron's sword dropped from his hand: the agony of his mind was evident in his trembling frame.

"Detested wretch! execrable Everard!" was all he uttered, as he bent to gaze on Beatrice: he groaned despair; and in convulsive pangs

was borne senseless to his own apartment by some of the domestics, who were collected at the noise the fatal occurrence occasioned.

Everard followed the baron, saw him placed on his bed, gave orders Armstrong and two others should continue with him till his reason returned, then withdrew, distracted by the discovery of his infernal plot.

The attendants of Isabella and Emmeline crowded round them, as the Baron was borne off.

Beatrice, to appearance lifeless, was placed on her bed; the wound she had received on her shoulder was bound up, and pungent applications administered to recover her.

Emmeline assisted Isabella to the adjoining

adjoining chamber, and more easily succeeded in her restoration.

She eagerly inquired the state of her friend: learning the alarming condition in which she remained, hastened to her.

Emmeline had already dispatched messengers for chirurgical advice: having shown more fortitude in this instance than her sister, was now requested to visit the baron, for whom the servants expressed alarm.

She found him speechless, expressing by his struggles internal agonies.

Emmeline gave orders to procure a physician, dispatching a messenger to the monastery of St. Gregory, to require the attendance of

father Thomas, soon as he returned.

Isabella, uneasy at the delay of her sister, proceeded to the chamber of the baron, and, though his situation might justly follow the deed he had committed, was struck with his alarming appearance.

Emmeline inquired for her brother, and learnt he had not returned since his early departure, after seeing his father placed on the bed.

Shocked at the neglect, Isabella proposed to rouse him to a sense of the baron's danger, and ventured to his apartment.

It was deserted.

On a small scroll was written—

“ Seek

“Seek not for Everard—search is vain.”

Isabella perused, with a deep concern, the mysterious billet; then returning to Emmeline, required her also to visit the chamber of their brother.

Thither they repaired: Isabella placed the paper in her sister's hands.

“Heavenly Father!” exclaimed Emmeline, “spare us; may the present punishment expiate the crimes of the house of Rowley.”

As she spoke, the wretched Neville returned to her memory: she considered the situation of her father, the conduct of Everard, and the blow inflicted on Beatrice, as

scourges for the dreadful guilt of the baron's youth.

Isabella, engrossed in reflections on the writing of Everard, had not attended to the exclamation of her sister.

They resolved to dispatch servants in search of their brother, yet with little hopes of recovering him, well knowing his determined spirit, and fearing his guilt would increase his resolution to prevent a discovery.

The arrival of the surgeon was announced: they attended him to the chamber of the baron.

His countenance impressed them with fearful suggestions: he declined giving his opinion. His patient's
state

state was too precarious to admit his decision: as a physician was expected, he willingly accepted the invitation of Isabella to remain till his arrival; in the mean time he recommended some simple expedients, then attended Emmeline to Beatrice.

The gentle sufferer had been restored, by the endeavours of Isabella, to recollection. Past misfortunes, and the dread of the future, rushed on her memory—the situation of her imprisoned father excited a desire for life.

At the moment of the surgeon's entrance, the inability of affording relief to the captive had rendered her insensible of her situation.

The surgeon examined and dressed the wound, of which he gave flattering hopes. The loss of blood would retard the recovery of her strength, and recommended a perfect silence might be observed.

During the day the physician attended: his opinion of the baron was by no means favourable.

The constant attendance of Isabella and Emmeline on their father and Beatrice, their distress at the absence of their brothers, and the uncertainty of the fate of Everard, reduced them also to a state of dejection. Their mutual arguments occasionally prevailed, to try the aid of sleep: short and uneasy were the slumbers they obtained.

Towards

Towards the seventh day from the catastrophe, Beatrice, whom reflection had absorbed in grief, entreated a private conference with father Thomas.

“ My bosom is oppressed,” said she to lady Isabella, “ and relief can only be obtained by his pious prayers.”

This was the first request Beatrice had expressed: the priest was in the castle: he had offered his humble devotions for the baron.

Isabella hastened to him: she repeated the desire of her friend; and in a few moments returned with the holy father.

Beatrice, who had that day risen
for

for the first time, expressed satisfaction on seeing him enter.

Perceiving she wished a secret conference, the sisters withdrew, and left Beatrice overjoyed, to relate a faithful history of herself, and her subterraneous discovery, to the priest, and to request a sequel of what he seemed unwilling to communicate, when he delivered her the ring.

He expressed the goodness of Providence, in her preservation; expatiated on a moment allotted by the Supreme for the accomplishment of his will, and the iniquity of those, who, with impious language, despair.

He then repeated the interview
he

he had had with Edward Sandford, his having confessed she was not his child, and his fears his death was prematurely effected.

Here Beatrice gave vent to her tears: she had exerted herself to suppress them; but the suggestion of Edward Sandford overcame her fortitude.

The priest admonished her—his words were the dew of consolation, which pervaded her bosom, and gave a speedy check to her grief.

Beatrice was beginning to repeat her future intentions, and ask his guidance; but the holy father, perceiving how much her prior relation had exhausted her, recommended silence, till recruited strength sanctioned

sanctioned the execution of any project which might be concluded on.

He blessed her; and, after informing her he daily visited the castle, and during the indisposition of the baron might be regularly found at mid-day in the chapel, took his leave. Beatrice, notwithstanding the exertion she had used, was greatly relieved by her conversation with him.

Many days elapsed—the situation of the baron was by no means favourable: short were his intervals of reason, and those wholly employed in calling on Beatrice, and execrating his son.

The lady Isabella, ignorant of the former guilt of her father, felt all
the

the tenderness and compassion his present situation could inspire; and in continual anxiety for others, lost even the precarious share of health which by constant attention she had enjoyed.

Emmeline, conscious of the crimes of the baron, whilst filial duty required her utmost sollicitude, could not fail to consider his sufferings a punishment from an offended God.

Beatrice slowly regained strength. During her confinement she received frequent visits from the good priest; but the society of her friends prevented her applying for further advice: she continued to hear of his daily attendance in the chapel, and resolved to meet him there.

The

The following day she executed her intention ; and with feeble step reached the appointed place, where, after joining the holy father in his devotions, returned her fervent prayers for the recovery of her health, and implored success in future undertakings. Still on her knees, she informed the priest of her resolution to endeavour her father's liberation, and besought his assistance.

To interfere in so important a point, which would not only render the house of Rowley his enemy, but draw on him the mistrust of others, he could by no means acquiesce in ; yet sanctioned her resolution, and gave important information.

It

It had been reported, in the society of which he was a member, that the castle of Rowley had a subterraneous communication with the sea-side ; that an opening from the cliffs had been effected during the former frequent invasions of foreign enemies ; and he doubted not, but one of the avenues which she described, leading from the passage, would open a path for the escape of her father.

Beatrice reflected a few minutes : she had fondly flattered herself with bribing one or other of the domestics of the castle ; but now a thousand impediments arose : she foresaw the natural attachment to those who provide food and raiment. How wretched

wretched would have been her situation had she made a confidant, and been betrayed; or, with a slender assistance, been discovered by any of the numerous vassals of the baron.

These, and successive reasons, which rapidly occurred, determined her following the plan suggested by the priest.

Her former determination, to embrace a monastic life, was wholly superseded in the hopes of restoring her parent to freedom and health.

She returned to her own apartment, resolving not to discover her intention even to her beloved Emeline.

Continuing to acquire strength, she fixed a time for the accomplishment

ment of her wishes, and had, unnoticed, visited the private apartment of the baron, where, finding the arrangement of the keys the same as she recollected them when she implored the freedom of Edward Sandford, felt perfectly secure.

The morn preceding the night on which she resolved the arduous attempt, entering her own apartment, was met by Isabella and Emmeline, whose endeavours could ill conceal they laboured under the pressure of some new affliction.

Beatrice, taking a hand of each, alternately kissed them.

"Oh, my friends!" exclaimed she, "why these tears? Explain the

the cause, and give to Beatrice the power to dry them."

"In thee alone," replied Isabella, "rests that power; thyself the cause, and in thyself the cure."

"In me!" said Beatrice—"Speak, I conjure thee. Oh! could my life efface the involuntary offence, it were a willing sacrifice. Relieve me, by an explanation of my crime."

"Give it not so severe a term," replied Isabella: "be composed. For some days past our wretched father has made repeated and particular inquiries of your health, frequently ordering you in his presence, to certify your existence, with solemn asseverations repeating his resolves not to survive should your death

death follow the wound he inflicted. Convinced of your cause to resist his wish, we have eluded his desire by assurances of your feeble state, asserting your gradual recovery; and have avoided mentioning the painful subject to you, fearful of injuring the tender plant, so lately blighted, and scarce in a decided state of health.

“ In answer to his inquiries relative to our brother, we have this day informed the baron of his sudden departure, a circumstance we had easily concealed from the indifference his silence on that head evinced.

“ The information, far from exciting

citing symptoms of uneasiness, was a visible source of pleasure.

“ He called for father Thomas : the good priest remained with him an hour ; and, on our return to his apartment, we were informed of the cruel misrepresentation Everard had given of his interview with you.” (Here Isabella related the conversation between her father and brother, previous to the instigations of the former to strike the unfortunate blow). “ And now, my Beatrice,” continued she, “ expect the fatal assertion we have just received.

“ With evident marks of distress, the baron seized our hands as he concluded.”

“ You

“ You have heard, my children, the progress of a passion, neither my rank, nor the meanness of the birth of a peasant, can suppress, much less overcome. See the situation the fear of having cut off the fairest blossom has reduced me. Let not my resolution then surprise you : be it *yours*, my children, to implore pity from the flinty bosom of Beatrice, to raise me from my bed, to give *your* father health and peace.— Go, try your eloquence : tell her, my life depends on her. I swear, the moment from your lips I’m bade despair shall see me terminate all earthly sufferings.”

He concluded with convulsive sighs : we remained some few mi-

K

nutes,

nutes, till he became calmer; then sought our sweet friend, to repeat the past, to hope her gentle bosom may, in pity to his childrens' sufferings, accept his offered hand."

Beatrice looked wildly at Isabella.

"What, lady," exclaimed she, "didst thou ask?—Something of my lord—I have mistook—Repeat the question."

Emmeline, seeing her sister unable to articulate, from internal agitation, resumed the discourse.

"Behold, sweet Beatrice," cried the lovely pleader, bending her knee as she addressed her, "your friend, your Emmeline, implores compassion on her father. Oh! be indeed our friend, our second mother.

mother. Too certain, alas! are all my doubts removed, that Beatrice is the resemblance of his former love.—Speak! say thou wilt bless the baron Rowley.”

“Cease! cease!” exclaimed Beatrice, looking with an air expressive of anger and contempt on Emmeline: “Dost thou exhort the daughter of Neville to become wife of a tyrant? Wouldst thou that Beatrice should wed her mother’s murderer? or shall she, whose innocence he dared attempt, repay the insult by a tame submission, and thus disgrace the sacred bonds of marriage?” Emmeline was awed, whilst Isabella expressed astonishment of what had fell from the lips of Beatrice; nor

would she be refused an explanation.

A sincere confession was immediately given by the daughter of Neville; nor did she omit the history received from him.

As Isabella became acquainted with the complicated crimes of her father, her gentle frame received a wound more fatal than that the baron's hand had inflicted on Beatrice: then faintly expressing her approbation of her friend, with difficulty she repeated—"No more, my Beatrice, will I urge you to a sacrifice, at which Nature shudders, and Heaven disapproves."

She paused: then exclaimed—
"Who shall carry to my father the
refusal?"

refusal! Must his children strike the parricidal blow?"

Isabella could not proceed. Emmeline alternately observed her sister and friend: the resolute manner of the latter deprived her of the power of a reply.

A long silence ensued: tears gave Beatrice relief; and, after expressing gratitude and affection to her amiable friends, proposed, if their fears really suggested her determination would prove fatal to the baron, to render deception a virtue, and inform him their intercessions had not been ineffectual. "Go tell him," continued she, "that on his recovery the wretched Beatrice refuses not to listen to his proposals."

"Ere that," interrupted Emmeline, "Heaven may have instigated some other pious fraud; for the present, to save *my* father is the duty of his child."

She then quitted the room, and hastened to the baron.

Isabella could not follow. The crimes of Rowley were graven on her heart. Apprehension for the future rushed on her recollection: she sunk in the arms of Beatrice.

The king of terrors was ready to strike, divested of the horrors in which fancy portrays him.

"Support me to my bed!" cried Isabella.

Beatrice summoning assistance,
the

the lovely sufferer was soon conveyed whither she desired.

The physician, who was in the castle, attended: he subsided the fears which Isabella's appearance had raised, and prescribed a medicine, on whose efficacy he placed much dependance.

Emmeline, whose visit to the baron had produced an immediate alteration, returned to the apartment of Beatrice, where, not finding her, repaired to that of her sister, and was alarmed at her unexpected situation.

She repeated the effect the delusive hopes had on her father. Isabella gave no answer but tears.

Emmeline tenderly endeavoured

to raise her spirits; and so far succeeded, that the latter exerted herself to support the drooping Emmeline. She bade her not despair; and, by a feigned appearance of ease, created hopes her recovery would soon take place.

Beatrice continued by the bedside till towards evening; when, perceiving Isabella inclined to sleep, she gently withdrew, and hastened to seize the key of the subterraneous passage.

Soon as she became mistress of it, various were the ideas it excited.

On the success of the night depended more than her life—her father's freedom.

The situation of the lady Isabella
then

then occurred. The plan she had formed of quitting the amiable sisters, without any information, struck her as ungrateful ; but the necessity of the circumstance overruled her commiserating suggestions.

Brighter prospects presented themselves : she looked on herself the deliverer of her father. The rustic Beatrice, in the event of success, would be the acknowledged heir of Neville. Her innocent bosom, unbiaſſed by any other passion, was wholly engrossed in friendship and filial affection.

She returned to the lady Isabella ; inquiring of whose state, Emmeline repeated with a smile the hopes she entertained from the sleep in which

her sister had continued during her absence.

A message was now delivered from the baron, which commanded her attendance.

“ Alas !” said she, addressing Beatrice, “ my unhappy father plunges deeper in distress. Dwelling on the delusive hopes that pity is excited in your bosom, he sends for me, by repetition, to increase his short-lived joy.”

Beatrice heard the summons for Emmeline unmoved: the death of her mother, which she justly imputed to the tyrant’s conduct, and the sixteen years’ imprisonment of her father, were circumstances which steeled her heart, and rendered her
insensible

insensible to the sufferings the baron experienced. The hasty wound he had inflicted on herself occasioned no resentment: it was scarce healed; yet her gentle disposition had ever suppressed a reflection, well knowing it must prove a dagger to his children.

Beatrice, with tender sollicitude, now seated herself by the side of Isabella, who shortly after seemed to awake, and expressed, with tenderness, pleasure on finding herself thus attended: desired her maidens to withdraw, wishing to hold a short conference with Beatrice.

They obeyed.

"Heaven has, in mercy, heard my prayers," said Isabella, in a

feeble voice ; “ I have been offering fervent ones, during the time I was supposed to sleep. Thou art sent to render, by a faithful acquiescence to my wishes, the dying moments of thy friend the happiest she has ever known. Think not, child of Providence, that Isabella expects thee to give thy hand to her father ; far, far from me the repugnant thought. No, my Beatrice ; but she claims thy sacred word, should it in fate be registered the supposed daughter of Edward Sandford shall be acknowledged of the house of Neville, as thou hopest mercy for thyself so show it others — a dying child sues thee for a guilty father. Disarm the vengeance of thy
much-

much-wronged parent: tell him, that Isabella loved his Beatrice, and claims his pity."

"My friend, my sister in affection," replied Beatrice, "may my prayers avert the early stroke. Let the solemn promise I here give relieve you of all disquiet for the safety of the baron:

"Be it my care, should Heaven in its wisdom restore me to my father, to soothe his anger; nor can I doubt but that the gentle treatment I've received from the daughters of lord Rowley will sheath the sword the cruel bondage the wretched Neville has experienced might in justice to his sufferings draw."

The

The lady Isabella returned a benignant smile, and, with effusions of gratitude, expressed her thanks. "And now, my friend, I am going to consign the most important secret with which I have been entrusted.—The moment of my dissolution is at hand: 'tis that alone which sanctions the discovery I am about to make.

"The proofs I have received of your resolution and piety rank you, Beatrice, worthy to be relied on.

"Thy eloquence prevailed on Emmeline to dare what her gentle frame, I had supposed, was incapable of attempting—to thee, therefore, I consign a trust; in full assurance no inducement can draw from thy faithful

faithful bosom what in confidence I now repose."

She paused a few moments to regain strength, then desired Beatrice to fetch a small drawer from a cabinet to which she pointed, and, instructing her how to open it, delivered her the contents, consisting of a packet. As she gave it into the hands of Beatrice, she thus addressed her:—

"From a dying mother, my friend, I received this paper, and with it, if I have power to repeat them, these instructions: they will enforce whatever is necessary for thy information. Taking me by the hand—'My Isabella,' said my fond parent, 'if the prayers of her
whose

latest breath will be drawn for the
 children of her bosom are dear to
 thee, treasure up this paper; when
 death has robbed thee of a mother,
 preserve a faithful remembrance of
 her words. Guard from every eye
 this sacred deposit; above all, I con-
 jure thee, preserve it from thy fa-
 ther. Search may be made in my
 cabinets; trust it not there, but
 wear it next thy heart till thou hast
 no cause to fear a discovery. Dur-
 ing the life of the baron, guard it
 in the same state in which I consign
 it thee, save this exception. My
 much-loved Ferdinand knows not
 the warm affection of a father:
 alas! the only cause I fear to die is
 raised from him, lest he should still
 experience

experience usage more unkind.—

Oh ! my Isabella, it wounds thy mother to instil suggestions prejudicial to thy father's honour. Mark my words : should he, by an open act of violence, or long continued unkindness, render the unhappy youth in need of pecuniary assistance, think of thy dying mother, and give him this.'

“ And now, my Beatrice, the injunctions of my mother I repeat to thee—‘ From every eye, I charge thee, guard the paper ; and, should (which Heaven forbid) my father's treatment of the noble Ferdinand claim thy compliance with the hallowed command, then tell him what a dying mother enjoined.’ As thou desirest

dearest blessings on thyself, be sincere."

The exertion the lady Isabella used occasioned an agitation which prevented Beatrice from informing her what she now considered an indispensable duty to repeat—her intention of quitting the castle.

Soon as Isabella appeared composed, she perceived her friend's desire of speaking, but the dying fair requested silence.

"A few moments, Beatrice, only are allotted me,—interrupt them not—"

She then bade her take from the cabinet, to which she had before pointed, the contents of the bottom drawer on the left hand.

Beatrice

Beatrice complied, and advanced to the bedside with a purse and ring.

"Those trifles," continued lady Isabella, are thine: the generous Ferdinand, to whom I have charged thee with the sacred mission, stranger to thy merit, but partaker of thy sorrow, bade me present them to thee, and with them his fervent prayers for thy happiness; may'st thou never need their value, but keep them as a token of his compassionate heart. She could not proceed, and with difficulty pronounced "Emmeline."

Beatrice hastily placed the paper near her heart, recollecting the charge given by the lady Rowley, consigning

consigning the purse to her pocket ; the ring she drew on her finger, to remind her of the trust : then entering an adjoining apartment, desired the lady Emmeline might be immediately summoned.

Alarmed at the hasty call, she quitted the baron, and attended her sister, in whom a visible alteration had taken place.

Emmeline could not restrain her tears ; the lady Isabella was for some time unable to speak : at length she regained her voice ; then took an affectionate leave of Emmeline, recommending, whatever might befall Beatrice, to preserve an inviolable attachment. Taking a small valuable relic from her neck, requested

quested the consent of her sister to present it Beatrice, as a proof of affection. Emmeline warmly approved the gift, and Beatrice with tears received it.

She tenderly desired to be remembered to her brothers, enforcing her to remain an unshaken advocate for Ferdinand, recalling the affection he had shown them in his earliest youth, which had increased with manhood.

“To my father,” continued she, in a trembling accent, “inform him, Isabella, in her dying moments, implored of Heaven that worldly happiness, of which she is so early deprived; thank him for all the instruction, by his permission, I have received

received, particularly that I have been taught to support the present moment, so much the dread of most, with resignation and with hope ; tell him, in full assurance of eternal bliss, I feel no regret in being separated from the transient pleasures of a present state. My Emmeline, implore his prayers for my departed soul—”

As she spoke, the priest, who had been informed by Agnes of the situation of her beloved mistress, entered. Articulation was gone for ever ; but the ineffable smile diffused on her countenance proved the purity of her conscience, and dignified her latest breath. Pressing to her bosom the crucifix which the holy father presented her, she expired in
the

the arms of her sister and Beatrice, without a struggle, surrounded by a train of sorrowing females.

Emmeline and her friend gently resigned their burden, and kneeling, joined in prayer for the departed spirit. The former was incapable of removing from the bed; the latter, sensible of the part she had still to support, implored fortitude and strength.

Emmeline was roused from her devotions by intelligence of the arrival of a messenger from the two sons of the baron: he had been dispatched by land, and reported his young masters might be hourly expected.

Beatrice congratulated Emmeline
on

on the certainty of their early return, feeling a satisfaction she could not impart. Deprived of the amiable Isabella, herself on the eve of departure, she had lamented the solitary situation of her friend; and rejoiced the society of her brothers would enable her to support the losses she sustained.

Emmeline consulted Beatrice on the propriety of informing her father of the death of the lady Isabella, which they resolved would be most prudent to conceal till the arrival of the heirs of Rowley, fearful the unexpected stroke might occasion a relapse, and endanger his life. Alas! the very circumstance on which Emmeline depended to excite transport
in

in the breast of the baron produced the alarming situation she had hoped to avoid, by concealing the loss of Isabella. Far from expressing satisfaction at the expected arrival of his sons, his features assumed the change of his mind, convulsive symptoms returned, and the pious Emmeline, whose trial was now indeed severe, was compelled to yield the mournful pleasure she had proposed of watching the remains of her loved sister, to attend, through the night, her agitated father.

Beatrice learnt the effect the news of his sons' arrival had on the baron. "Alas!" thought she, "my mother's features are renewed in me, and ere the return of his noble
L children,

children, whose disapprobation he is certain must ensue, flatters himself with rendering their objections invalid by the completion of an union. Wrong his judgment of the daughter of Neville: never would she consent to wed his tyrant.—Detested thought!”

Then taking a hasty retrospect of the occupations of the family, found them so engaged no apprehensions arose to retard her intended descent.

Towards midnight she paid a final visit to the corpse of her friend; she kissed with fervor the cold lips on which so late had sat the smiles of virtuous fascination.

Agnes remarked the difficulty with which she quitted the dear remains:
concluding

concluding her intense melancholy might disorder her weakened frame, intreated an attendant might be permitted to watch by her:

Beatrice replied, to imprint the sweet features of the lady Isabella on her memory was the occasion of her visit. "Never," added she, "shall the countenance of my blessed friend be erased from my recollection;" adding, she did not propose retiring to bed, but should employ the remainder of the night in prayer, desiring she might not be intruded on, fearing the inquisitive Agnes might interrupt her plans by her solicitude — then returning to her own apartment, prepared for her descent.

During her residence in the castle, she had discovered a less-frequented way to the entrance of the passage: What might have been an objection to a mind less fortified was to her not deserving a thought.

To attain the unfrequented path it was necessary to traverse a large hall, round which was placed entire suits of armour, and many vestments, worn on days of tournaments or parade by the predecessors of Rowley.

Beatrice attired herself in the least cumbrous manner—a fillet bound her luxuriant tresses; and furnished with a phial of drops, and a well-trimmed lamp, she proceeded.

On traversing the armoury, for so
was

was the hall called, the glimmering light shone on a cloak, which, suspended by a hook to the wainscot, recalled to Beatrice the necessity of a covering for her captive father. With a sudden exertion she disengaged it, and congratulated herself on the providential circumstance.

She soon found herself at the door of the passage, and entering, locked it on the inside; then hurried on, and eager to embrace her father, traversed the long path which separated them in a shorter time than on preceding nights.

As she opened the door of his cell, surprise overpowered her—scarce could she exclaim “My father!” and sunk into his arms.

Accustomed to find him extended on his palate, she could not at first credit her sight, beholding him seated on a low bench, and supported by the wall: recovering from her surprise, she required the cause.

Neville replied, "My child, behold the effects thy providential interference has produced. Long, long ere this I had been numbered with the dead, but thy care restored me—thy eloquence persuaded me to live. Many hours previous to thy first appearance I had persevered in refusing nourishment:—after thy departure I again returned to my tasteless morsel.

"Conducted by an Almighty hand, thou camest a second time;

and

and in my feeble arms I pressed my child.—How wonderful the ways of Providence! — how mysterious its decrees!

“Since we last parted, a longer time than ordinary elapsed, and my relentless gaoler failed to visit me—horrid fears arose.—I thought my Beatrice discovered, and her unhappy father left to perish, by a death exceeding human torments, the conflicts of the mind. My lamp ceased to burn,—to the precious cordial—you provided me do I owe my preservation.

“At length a ray of hope darted on my mind—the door of my dungeon was opened—and with impati-

ence I expected to be saluted, Father.

“Light, to eyes inured to darkness, was too dazzling: I could not discern the person who entered.— Silence soon convinced me it was my hardened gaoler.

I called him cruel wretch, inhuman monster, who, in possession of comforts long torn from one deprived even of the common blessings bounteous Heaven diffuses, now languished for the scanty supply of his dry morsel.

“I was answered by a sigh.—
 ‘Who art thou?’ I exclaimed.—
 ‘’Tis not my inhuman gaoler—that deep-drawn breath bespeaks a softer heart.

heart. If pity ever touched thy breast, extend it to one, long an inhabitant of this dungeon.'

"The person drew nearer as I spoke; applying water to my lips convinced me it was a benevolent hand. He heard my sad tale, and, in return, acquainted me of the consternation of the family — of the wound my Beatrice had received — of the dangerous situation of the baron, on whom Armstrong being in constant attendance had been prevented visiting me, who, goaded by a sting of conscience, imparted the secret of my imprisonment to his comrade, till that hour ignorant of my present existence, having, from a

feigned burial, been taught to believe me dead.

“Armstrong charged him not to listen to my lamentations, should I complain; and bound him by an oath to return, after placing my usual allowance, without speaking.

“Though from his breach of promise I had no reason to depend on him, yet I could not resist the only opportunity I had received of conferring with a domestic of the castle.

“I promised large sums to allure him to my interest. Fear of the baron overpowered my arguments:—in vain I assured him, could my liberation be effected, of his perfect safety.

“I so-

" I solicited him to communicate my existence to some ancient friends.

" I sued in vain—merciless as was his master, he would not prove unfaithful to him.

" All I could obtain from his humanity was a removal of the chain, which, though slight in comparison to what I had once been loaded with, still greatly annoyed me.

" He daily visited me, and finding no probability of being discovered by Armstrong (wholly engaged with the baron), acquiesced with my repeated entreaties, and supplied me with these clothes, which, with his assistance I put on, and, incapable of undressing, have been obliged constantly to wear.

"Hearing of my child's restoration, I have lived in hopes of the blessings I now enjoy once more of folding her in my arms—of admonishing her with all the energy a father's words can impart.

"Fly this detested castle!—wait not the returning strength of the tyrant. Alas! my child, no suffering so great as what proceeds from apprehension of thy safety—my prayers have been hourly offered for thy preservation."——

Beatrice interrupted him. "Oh, my father! behold me resolved this night to liberate you, or expire." Then repeated the conference she had held with the priest—related the scene preceding the death of the lady Isabella,

bella, relative to the safety of the baron — concluding by throwing over her father's shoulders the cloak she had provided, urging him not to delay the opportunity of escaping.

Tears fell from the eyes of Neville at the prospect of freedom; but his hopes were suddenly checked, considering his helpless state.

Beatrice endeavoured to raise his spirits. “That Power,” cried she, “whose breath can raise the dead, and restore the departed spirit, cannot he infuse into our feeble frames sufficient vigor to assist us hence?— He can—he has—already I feel myself inspired! Yes, my father, thy daughter's arms and resolution shall support thee!”

Neville,

Neville, trembling, rose from his seat—his attempts to proceed were for some time ineffectual.

Beatrice surmounted every difficulty. What cannot filial piety effect?

She supported her feeble parent with unusual exertions; and, giving into his hand the friendly lamp, with tottering step they took leave of the dungeon.

Their progress was slow.—She paused as they attained the division of the five passages. To deliberate availed not: the situation of the castle guided her to proceed through the most western, nor was she mistaken in her determination.

She was frequently obliged to re-
cover

cover breath, and support her burden against the damp walls which confined them.

Still cheered by hope, they proceeded; and, by her gentle persuasions, encouraged her father, and prevented his fears proving fatal.

Her ear at length caught a sound—she knew not what to attribute it to—it gave speed to their pace.

As they advanced, she distinguished the dashing of the waves against the cliffs.—They offered up grateful thanks to him who had thus conducted them.

The passage now decreased in space.—No longer would its height admit of their walking: the rocks, by the sudden alteration in the passage, prevented

prevented' any other means of proceeding but creeping on their hands and knees.

Such a method ill suited the feeble Neville.

Slowly he followed his child, whose voice animated him.

At length she exclaimed,—“Bliss supreme!—My father, the light of day recompenses our toil. — Yes, we shall be free!”

An opening now presented itself. 'Twas calculated only to admit one; and that in the manner already pointed out by necessity.

Beatrice felt herself at liberty: she took the lamp from her father; and throwing it from her, fervently prayed they were the last to whom its aid

aid might be required to light from the dungeon.

Neville still required the assistance of his daughter.—She administered a small portion of her phial, and its warmth invigorated him.

To defend his head from the blasts of the keen north, she took a handkerchief from her neck, and bound up his grey hairs, become so not from age, but sorrow.

With perseverance and difficulty at length they gained a recess in the cliff, which offered a short asylum from their excessive fatigue.

Here she again recruited her father with the restoring cordial, and prevailed on him to court the more efficacious remedy—sleep.

Exhausted

Exhausted by fatigue, he submitted to her persuasions, whilst she determined to reconnoitre the rock, in hopes of finding a path by which they might gain some friendly roof.

Beatrice, after repeated efforts, reached the summit of the cliff, from whence she discovered the monastery to which father Thomas belonged; but vainly tried to find some friendly path by which she might insure the safety of her parent.

She foresaw the total impossibility of supporting him on the broken parts of the cliff by which she had ascended.—No friendly aid appeared.

To seek relief from the monastery
was

was to run a hazard of leaving him to perish. The chance of the holy priest being from thence—and the little credit her story might receive from others, at once deterred and alarmed her.

In this situation she knew not how to proceed. She threw herself on her knees, imploring divine assistance.—Then returned to the recess in which she left her father, to inform him of the perils with which they were surrounded.

Neville was awakened from a disturbed sleep; and, as she entered, was anxiously examining the cloak with which he was covered.

“My child!” cried he, whilst the big drops fell from his eyes, “in
this

this was thy father clad when parting with thy mother.—He defied the tyrant Rowley, and fell beneath the force of united arms.—Oh, my prophetic fears!—Alas! my Beatrice, I tremble to repeat them. Whilst clad in this bloody garb, our preservation seems endangered.”

The fortitude with which Beatrice had been supported now drooped.

In vain Neville urged his child to save herself by flight.

Beatrice repeated her determination to die by his side, if the will of Heaven opposed his preservation.

In this situation prayer was again their resource:—then with pious resignation calmly waited the completion of divine will.

A vessel

A vessel appeared in sight. It drew near the shore.

Beatrice exulting, as it approached, hastened to mount a conspicuous rock, which projected from the cliff; and waving a loose part of her dress, was soon answered by a signal, which she understood would attempt relief.

Now beat the filial heart of Beatrice, as she saw a small boat, filled with men, advancing underneath the spot on which she stood.

They landed.

The gaze of astonishment was general at her situation : they bade her, as she valued her life, not endeavour to quit the place till they could bring assistance, concluding, from
the

the appearance of danger, she demanded it for herself only.

Beatrice quickly undeceived them; and throwing herself on her knees, besought their humanity to support a feeble old man to a place of security.

Those who had landed followed in silence; nor could their astonishment be described at the sight of Neville, who was now incapable of using his feet.

His situation could not fail to appear mysterious and excite curiosity.

Beatrice addressing those whose deportment and the respect shewn them convinced her of their superiority, implored them not to ask the recital of a history which would not
only

only distress her by relating it, but deprive her father for a longer time of that assistance his state demanded.

As she spoke, a noble youth exclaimed,—“It is—it must be Beatrice !”

She caught the sound of her name; and trembling with fear of a discovery, in a supplicating posture implored her own and father’s safety.

In few words succeeded an explanation: the chiefs of those Providence had sent to their relief were the sons of the baron Rowley.

Ferdinand, who, on contemplating her, recognised the sweet features which had formerly interested him,
by

by an involuntary exclamation received an assurance of what he wished to learn. She was the same—which, casting his eyes on her hand, the ring he had deposited with his sister confirmed.

Hildebrand, eager to learn the mystery, which the different appearance of her father (to the person she had acknowledged before as such), consulted a few moments with Ferdinand; and detaining two of their attendants, commanded the remainder of the party to return to the vessel, and land at the appointed place, with orders to dispatch messengers to the castle with news of their arrival, and the cause of their detention.

Neither

Neither Neville or Beatrice heard the orders, or their entreaties had prevented their being given.

With respect and attention due from youth to age, the sons of Rowley assisted the helpless father of Beatrice.

In vain did Ferdinand beseech the lovely trembler to continue, till, having safely placed Neville, he might return and assist her also.

Her refusal did but excite his admiration: she followed closely as they supported the helpless Neville, and fondly wrapped the cloak around him.

Having reached the summit of the cliff:—Beatrice, whose eyes glistened like the dew on the opening

M blossoms,

blossoms, repeated grateful acknowledgments.

Hildebrand restrained her, by requiring a candid recital of the past.

An unwillingness to comply raised in the generous bosom of the youth opinions less favourable than those she had excited in Ferdinand.

Hildebrand, unable to refrain his indignation of her supposed duplicity, in a commanding tone bade the young men who attended bear Neville to the castle:—" 'Tis there," added he, " the baron Rowley will scrutinise this mystery."

Beatrice had only power to utter (whilst throwing her arms round her father) " Oh ! save him, save him !" and fell senseless on the earth.

Neville

Neville observed her distress, and, by bitter invectives and imprecations on the tyrant Rowley, still more enraged Hildebrand.

“Thou art my prisoner,” exclaimed the youth, “and ill does it become thee to use such language to the heir of Rowley! Silence, old man, would better suit thy situation.”

“Silence,” repeated Neville.—
“Shall him thou dar’st to threaten, insulting boy, be ordered silence.”

“See,” continued he, pointing to his emaciated ancles, “shall these worn limbs have suffered years of fettered captivity, and I not speak?”

“Behold the work of Rowley.
—His blood flows in thy veins—

again wilt thou drag me to prison!
—again——”

“ Hold, hold!” interrupted Ferdinand, who was supporting Beatrice, and perceived how much the language of Neville had wounded his brother, “ I conjure thee cease. If the cause is just, the sons of Rowley will themselves be thy advocates. —Confide in Hildebrand—confide in Ferdinand.—If honour and integrity thou boast, our lives, our fortunes, shall protect thy claims.”

“ I will—I do confide in thee!” replied Neville:—“ Thy countenance, beaming with soft humanity, cannot conceal a vindictive heart.

“ Then carry me to the castle!—let me confront the tyrant baron!—

on

on thee, generous youth, I place my trust."

Beatrice was sufficiently recovered to understand their intended return.

Ferdinand, with tenderness, assured her of both their safety; concluding by intimating he was the donor of the trifle on her finger.

"Art thou then Ferdinand?" cried Beatrice, gazing on him with wild surprise. "Then are we indeed shielded by a righteous arm! Oh! confirm thy promise; say again thou wilt protect us!"

"Yes, on my soul, I will," cried Ferdinand, with energy, "prove thyself innocent! The hand that dares offer violence shall first resist the strength of mine!"

M 3

"On

“On artless truth I depend,” cried Beatrice. “Guided by filial duty, I fear no scrutiny.—Hear all thou wishest to know; and where my sad relation, by strange events, seems to impose on credibility, the lovely Emmeline will confirm my words.”

Hildebrand, who alone had judged unfavourably, was now impressed with sentiments of pity; and Neville, placing entire confidence in the youths, prevented Beatrice from relating their history till their return to the castle. He wished once more to see the baron, although he had promised compliance with the desire of his child to take no revenge on the personal safety of his cruel foe;

foe; yet he glowed with the probability of reproaching his base unmanly conduct.

The sun had passed its meridian when the party entered the castle.

Those who had been dispatched from the vessel had scarce arrived.

All was in confusion—the shrieks of Emmeline saluted their ears; in a moment after she was in the arms of her brothers: — then quitting them, pressed Beatrice to her bosom. Their mute eloquence, more than language, spoke the sentiments they entertained of each other.

The vassals surrounded them, congratulating the return of the youths, gazing on Neville and Bea-

M 4

trice:

trice: the latter, holding his hand, betrayed fear of quitting him.

Hildebrand and Ferdinand inquired for the baron—for Isabella—for Everard.—Emmeline wept.

“Alas!” said she, “my brothers have much to grieve!—let us retire. How much will the conduct of the virtuous Beatrice excite admiration.”

The daughter of Neville blushed as her friend mentioned her worth: then requesting to withdraw to a private apartment with her father, entreated Emmeline to clear the apparent mystery of her conduct, which had given rise to unfavourable conjectures.

They

They acquiesced in her wishes : Hildebrand and Ferdinand accompanied Emmeline, and learnt the fatal occurrences which had transpired since their departure : the situation in which Beatrice and her father had been found was the only circumstance she could not explain.

Ignorant of the manner in which their escape had been effected, the event no less redounded to their astonishment and admiration of Beatrice.

The retrospect of what was now related excited conflicting emotions—the death of a loved sister—the uncertainty of a brother—and the present alarming situation of the lord Rowley—rendered the return, which

they had flattered themselves would promote universal joy, a scene of terror and dismay.

The baron, a short time previous to the arrival of his sons, had learnt the circumstance of their having landed on the cliff; and, by the description he received of the beautiful female who excited their humanity, was immediately seized with jealous suspicions — it was the matchless Beatrice.

Emmeline, who was at that moment ignorant of her escape, endeavoured to persuade him to the contrary.

He commanded Beatrice should immediately be brought before him. — Emmeline returned the answer she had

had received from Agnes—‘her friend during the night proposed to employ herself in acts of devotion, requesting not to be disturbed.’

A fit of rage followed these remonstrances. — Emmeline entered the apartment of Beatrice, whom she expected to have found reposing after the fatigue of the night.

The desertion of the chamber now certified the suspicions of her father.

With trembling step she returned.—her countenance proclaimed the fact.

A paroxysm of passion ensued;—he was by force compelled to his bed—a physician and father Thomas were immediately sent for.

During this confusion the brothers,

thers, with their party, entered the castle.

Hildebrand and Ferdinand, fearing to increase the danger of the baron, restrained their impatience of seeing him till a return of composure.

During the recital of Emmeline, their looks and actions expressed their sentiments: one while pacing the apartment, their cheeks diffused with crimson; at others, visibly affected, and not able to suppress the tears which stood in their eyes.

Ferdinand, particularly engrossed in the sufferings of Beatrice (whom filial affection had first brought to his sight, and whose beauty had been often not only the subject of his thoughts but conversation), re-
solved

solved, previous to visiting the baron, to secure her peace of mind, by a solemn engagement to place herself and Neville in an asylum ere return of night.

Leaving Hildebrand, still receiving confirmation of the guilt of the baron from the lips of Emmeline, he hastened to Beatrice, whom he found administering to the consolation of her father.

The interview was short—a summons from lord Rowley demanded the obeisance of his sons.

The young men attended.—His appearance was alarming.

They expressed uneasiness at the alteration which had taken place in the castle.

The

The baron returned a movement of the head, and fixing his eyes on Ferdinand, exclaimed wildly—
 “Who art thou?—where—where is Everard?—’Tis my sons I asked!”

“And sure, my lord,” cried Ferdinand, kneeling by the bedside, “does not disown me?”

“I do, I do disown thee!” exclaimed the baron. “Begone, I say!—Oh, bear him from my sight!”

Ferdinand in silence withdrew, supported by an upright conscience: even the cruel reception he experienced was less painful than that the guilty tyrant felt.

Hildebrand, whose filial affection was sincere, attempted, by a repetition of circumstances, honourable to Ferdinand,

Ferdinand, to raise him in the esteem of the baron. The latter commanded silence on any subject in which Ferdinand was concerned. He then desired an account of the mission.

“My answers,” replied Hildebrand, “are sealed, and are to be delivered to the earls Fitzwilliam and Leicester, baron lord Elgin, and others of the confederate nobles.

“Not suspecting the events that have transpired since our departure, your sons, my lord, had hoped to have been greeted by parental congratulations, and the applauses of their noble employers.

“The messenger whom I dispatched

patched from Calais carried letters to the principal friends of our cause, requesting their immediate attendance here, where I expected to have arrived some hours earlier.

“ No doubt they will soon be here, impatient to learn the result of the embassy : but amidst the general sorrow, who shall greet them with the smiles of welcome ? ”

Scarce had Hildebrand ceased, when the arrival of a party of nobles was announced.

He ordered them to be introduced into the hall of audience, and again repeated to the baron the heavy heart with which he was necessitated to do the honours of the castle.

Lord

Lord Rowley expressed a desire to rise: the perturbed state of mind in which he continued forbade Hildebrand from urging him to an exertion he had reason to fear might increase his danger: he therefore proposed to his father the strangers should be introduced to his chamber, and there pay their respects.

The baron was silent.—Hildebrand hastened to welcome the earls Fitzwilliam and Leicester, with their adherents.

The heir of Rowley, bowing respectfully to the strangers, presented them the papers, which, having carefully perused, they highly applauded the diligence and precision with which

which he had executed the important mission.

Hildebrand, in respectful language, returned acknowledgments for the satisfaction they expressed, adding, it would but ill repay his generous brother, whom he was compelled to trust with the performance of the weighty concerns, to receive the praises so deservedly his due.

They joined in requesting the introduction of Ferdinand, whose relinquishment of the applause and honour of a mission of such importance inspired them with respect and attachment.

Hildebrand ordered his brother to be informed the noble visitors requested his attendance.

Previous

Previous to his entrance, he thus enhanced their opinion of Ferdinand.

“ Urged, my lords, by an honourable impetuosity, I received a hurt, which prevented the prosecution of my journey for some days.

“ Conscious of the importance of such a delay, I imparted to my brother the orders I received from my father, urging him to use his utmost speed to execute them and return.

“ He required a private conference with the favourite of Lewis.

“ The minister received him favourably—expressing approbation of his abilities.

“ Ferdinand, obliged to delay his return until the pleasure of the king was known, accepted the offer of
the

the minister to reside at his palace during his stay in Paris.

“ His conduct exceeding his years, gained him the admiration and esteem to all he was introduced.

“ A sword, whose hilt is richly studded with jewels, was delivered him as a proof of the approbation of the sovereign.

“ The evening previous to his departure, the minister, after expressing the royal will, and extolling the supposed heir of Rowley, concluded by the offer of his richest jewel—his daughter, the lady Henrietta.

“ Ferdinand, who had seen and could not fail of admiring the beautiful and accomplished daughter of the

the count, relinquished the offered blessing.

“ He avowed the act fraternal affection had dictated, and on his knee implored it might still remain a secret.

“ The minister enraptured with such a proof of disinterestedness, apparently yielded to his desire, and, with incredible dispatch, Ferdinand returned to the spot where it was resolved I should remain, informed me of having assumed my name, and urged me not to divulge the feint; adding, as our attendants had remained at the post where we landed, no discovery could take place.

“ Affectionate arguments ensued. —In fine, being perfectly restored,

we

we prepared to return, when the unexpected arrival of a messenger from the minister detained us a few hours.

“ That nobleman, charmed with the conduct of Ferdinand, and fearful of my ignorance of the entire affection he had for me, gave under his own signature the pleasing relation.

“ The letter contained also the offer he had made him of his daughter; and willing to unite his family with that which boasted such a branch, again tendered her, with a fortune suited to her rank, to the heir of Rowley.

“ Judge of my feelings ! noble lords. I remonstrated with my brother

ther on his relinquishment of the lady Henrietta.—He removed the scruples delicacy had raised, assuring me sentiments in favour of a very extraordinary object had preserved his heart from the attractions of the amiable daughter of the count.

“ I answered the letter:—expressed my sense of the honour done me:—trusted my future conduct would maintain the reputation the prudence of a younger brother had acquired me:—concluded by engaging to return and claim my promised bride, as speedily as circumstances would admit.”

The noble guests applauded the conduct of Ferdinand, not less the ingenuous recital of Hildebrand,
which

which proved how mutual was their fraternal affection.

Lord Fitzwilliam inquired after the beautiful Emmeline and the lovely Isabella, also of Mr. Everard.

Hildebrand repeated what he had lately been informed concerning the two latter; adding, the health of the lady Emmeline, saving a depression, the result of the sad occurrences, was perfect.

Hildebrand, eager for the entrance of Ferdinand, again summoned a servant to inquire the cause of his delay.

An affecting scene had taken place in the apartment where Beatrice and her father had been introduced.

Ferdinand

Ferdinand, on being dismissed the presence of the baron, returned to the attractive Beatrice.

His countenance bespoke distress; nor was the cause long concealed.

"Discarded by my father," added Ferdinand, "from this hour I devote my life to the service of Beatrice.— Yes, lovely sufferer, to promote thy happiness shall restore mine."

Beatrice deliberated a few minutes:—the charge she received from the lady Isabella occurred in its full force.

Ferdinand, dismissed by his father, was on the point of quitting the castle, and seeking in the society of strangers the kindred he was now compelled to relinquish.

Emmeline entered as Beatrice concluded her reflections, who, drawing the paper from her bosom, where she had concealed it, delivered it into the hands of Ferdinand.

“The dying Isabella,” said Beatrice, “with the repeated prayers of her fond mother, bequeathed this to thee.” Then fell on her knees, and raising her eyes to Heaven, exclaimed—“Behold me, fainted spirit of my friend, fulfilling thy sacred injunctions.—May the result prove a source of consolation to the injured!”

Ferdinand listened to her ejaculation; then, with prophetic confidence, opened the paper:—it was addressed to him.

He read the contents with visible agitation:

agitation: his cheeks became flushed, he trembled, and, in this state of mind, received the first summons Hildebrand had dispatched, to request his attendance.

Ferdinand's disorder was too visible to be surmounted.—Not breaking the seal of the interior paper, he folded it in the cover, and put it in his pocket.

Emmeline, with concern, saw his emotions:—he paid little attention even to her solicitude—was silent, absorbed in thought, and stood unconscious of the message.

The second request he attended to, when, at that moment, from an opposite door, entered the baron Rowley, borne in a large chair by

his servants, robed in rich vestments, little suited to his emaciated appearance, fast verging to his final dissolution; whilst, from the other, entered the manly Ferdinand.

The baron, exerting himself faintly, greeted the noble guests: they returned his compliments, and repeated hopes of a speedy recovery.

Lord Fitzwilliam then embraced Ferdinand, and took on himself to introduce him to the company.

They repeated their encomiums, congratulating the baron on the merits of his generous sons, to neither of whom could they assign pre-eminence.

The baron, unconscious of their meaning

meaning, remained some moments silent:—then desired to be informed of the success of the mission.

“Beyond our hopes,” exclaimed the senior earl; “and to this youth,” pointing to Ferdinand, “we principally owe our obligation.”

“To Hildebrand—to the heir of Rowley,” interrupted the baron, “your praise is due.”

“To both,” replied earl Fitzwilliam.

“What!” exclaimed the baron, darting a fiery look of revenge at Ferdinand, “art thou come hither to rob my son of his due? Begone, presumptuous boy!—the sight of thee, more hateful than the savage wolf, disturbs the peace of Rowley.”

As he spoke, his features expressed even more inveteracy than his words.

Instead of retiring in silence, as he had before, when dismissed the presence of the baron, Ferdinand advanced, and, bowing to the lords, requested their decision on a cause he begged to submit to them, solemnly engaging himself to be guided by their superior judgments.

They bowed, and, laying their hands on their hearts, silently accepted the proposal.

The baron appeared awed with the dignity and eloquence of Ferdinand, and remained motionless, whilst the ill-treated youth proceeded to unfold reply the unkindness

ness he had in earliest infancy experienced from the baron—the impression it had made on him—the increasing aversion of lord Rowley towards him as he approached manhood — and the joy himself experienced on obtaining permission to accompany the heir of Rowley, to whose virtues he paid a profuse and sincere tribute, faintly hoping a short absence might cause an alteration on his return—then repeated his anxiety to be introduced to the baron, and his unkind reception; concluding by an account of his dismissal and silent submission.

Ferdinand continued. “ My filial obedience, now shook off by the lord Rowley from the bonds
 N 4 which

which have long held me in dutiful subjection, I claim the shield of that Almighty Father who protects and raises the innocent.

"This paper, my noble judges, will unfold more than what I am yet acquainted with.

"This, sir," said he, addressing lord Rowley, "is your seal."

As he spoke, he opened the letter delivered by Beatrice, and presented to the tyrant's view a paper to which was affixed a large impression.

The baron casting his eyes on it, exclaimed, with involuntary agitation, "'Tis mine, 'tis mine!" Then, with a convulsive grasp, endeavoured to seize it.

Ferdinand

Ferdinand cautiously consigning it to the earl Fitzwilliam, requested him to read aloud the contents of both papers, again observing he was ignorant of the contents of that to which the seal of the baron Rowley was affixed.

Here the baron loudly demanded the dismissal of Ferdinand.

Hildebrand and the lords interfered:—they urged the baron calmly to hear the contents of the papers. Guilt rendered him vociferous—his conscience condemned him.

Unheeding his agitations, lord Fitzwilliam, breaking the seal, thus read aloud:

“Ferdinand, supposed third son of Hildebrand baron lord Rowley,

is the undoubted son and heir of Ferdinand earl of Glenmore."

Then followed the signatures of the baron Rowley and Elizabeth his wife.

The lords gazed on each other with evident marks of surprise.

Hildebrand fixed his eyes on his father, who denied the signature, and accused Ferdinand of impiety and fraud.

The youth with downcast eyes waited the proceeding of earl Fitzwilliam: the other lords testified their curiosity to be informed of the remainder, and thus he continued to read.

"To Ferdinand, lawful heir of an only brother, child of my affections,

tions, fears for thy safety compels me to this act.

“Hear me, Supreme Distributor of Justice!—Let not the present rise in judgment against me;—guided by conscience, and actuated by the solemn promise made my noble brother, earl of Glenmore, and Emmeline his wife, I here resolve to treasure the inclosed beyond the preservation of my life;—alas! too conscious its existence only shall insure the heir of Glenmore the rights of his noble family.”—

Lord Fitzwilliam paused:—there was yet much to read; but the condition of the baron prevented due attention being paid.

Hildebrand, turning to Ferdinand,

N 6

expressed

expressed his assurance of the reality of the signatures; and pointing to his father, requested the remainder of the important paper might be deferred till he had attended the baron to his chamber.

Ferdinand replied, "the noble visitors had professed themselves his judges, and by them alone he was guided."

Hildebrand, then bowing, addressed them, and appealed to their humanity to admit the removal of the baron.

The lords unanimously acquiesced: Hildebrand then gave orders for the attendance of the principal domestics, whose peculiar office was the person of their master; when, suddenly,

denly, the entrance of Beatrice, followed by Emmeline, created fresh surprise, and delayed the removal.

Beatrice, unmindful of the company, whose eyes were rivetted on her, threw herself on her knees to Ferdinand.

“My friend, my protector, fulfil thy solemn promise:—again my father will be dragged to prison—thy arm alone can stay the ruffian’s power.”

Ferdinand heard no more: leaving Beatrice on the floor, he rushed to the apartment she had quitted, where finding Armstrong with cords binding the infirm Neville, he, with one stroke severed the villain’s arm.

Unable to resist, he reeled and fell,

fell, whilst another of the baron's favorites stood aghast.

Neville uttered the effusions of his soul — "Thy thanks," replied Ferdinand, "belong to Beatrice — 'tis she who bade me execute my promise; but it is not yet complete, I pray refuse me not — suffer me to lead thee where numerous friends in justice shall espouse thy cause, and crush the power of Rowley."

Neville's silence was sufficient acquiescence. — Supported by Ferdinand and Seward, they repaired to the hall, where the lords surrounded Beatrice, whilst Hildebrand and Emmeline endeavoured to appease the agonies of the baron, who, at the sight

fight of Beatrice, had been thrown into a paroxysm of torture.

Ferdinand, with his companion, added to the general consternation.

The countenance and beard of Neville were white as new-fallen snow, which, added to his helpless state, gave the appearance of extreme age.

“ Oh, my father !” cried Beatrice, embracing him in a transport of joy, “ thy child seest thee freed from the horrid dungeon.”

“ Yes !” replied Neville, “ the arm of Ferdinand rescued me :—but whom do I behold?—Is not that my tyrant?—is not that the merciless Rowley ?

“ Monster !

now "Monster! monster! my wrongs
are now avenged—I live to see thee
suffer pangs exceeding those thy
cruelty inflicted.—The wounds of
guilt more poignant anguish give
than sixteen years imprisonment have
proved!"

As he spoke, he raised his arm,
and fixed his eyes on the baron, who,
recalled to life, wildly returned his
earnest gaze. "What vision's that?" exclaim-
ed lord Rowley. "Detested spirit,
I know thee not!"

"Not know me?" interrupted
Neville. "Hast thou forgot this
cloak?—this very cloak, which
hung upon my shoulders, when
thy

thy minions, headed by thyself, wounded and hither brought Horatio Neville?—Hast thou forgot thy prisoner? Behold the work of Providence!—his righteous arm has saved, and will destroy!”

The baron could support no more: he fell senseless in the arms of his servants, who, at the command of Hildebrand, bore him to his chamber.

An explanation of the late transactions was now repeated. Lord Fitzwilliam recognised in sir Horatio Neville a friend of his early youth.

Each expressed abhorrence of the baron's tyranny; and lord Fitzwilliam took an opportunity of repeating the merits of Ferdinand, who
had

had that day ceased to be acknowledged by a father.

“ He shall find one here !” exclaimed sir Horatio, clasping him in his arms, as he stood beside him. “ The generous Ferdinand shall never need a parent whilst the father of Beatrice exists !

“ Excuse me, lords,” continued he, “ this castle is hateful to me :—too long inured within its walls, I pant to breathe a purer air.—To thee, my son, it must alike prove painful !—attend us hence, as thou didst promise ; and prove protector—brother to my Beatrice.”

Ferdinand pressing his hand, turned to the lords, and besought them still to judge his cause : then repeating

ing the generous offer of sir Horatio to adopt him as a son, implored the hand of Beatrice might ratify the bond.

The lords united in soliciting an union might take place, with more auspicious prospects than past events had given reason to hope. They repeated to sir Horatio (who, whilst they had been speaking, joined the hands of Ferdinand and Beatrice) the discovery and confirmation of the earl of Glenmore in the person of Ferdinand.

The conclusion of the paper, which the situation of the baron had prevented from being read, was now made known. It contained a conscientious apology for the conduct of
the

the lady Rowley, and the circumstances which induced it; the contents were to the following effect:—

“During a visit of the deceased earl of Glenmore and his lady at the castle, the earl was suddenly seized with a fever, which terminated a short, but glorious life. His lady was then pregnant:—whilst dying, he enjoined his sister, the lady Rowley, to prove her affections for him by kindness to his relief; and, in case the will of Heaven should prematurely snatch her also from a world of care, recommended her to be a mother to the offspring, should any be permitted to remain.

“The lady Rowley readily complied; and, after the interment of the earl,

earl, prevailed on his inconsolable widow to continue at the castle till her delivery had taken place.

“Anxiety for the loss of her brother, and the declining state of the young countess, occasioned the lady Rowley’s premature labour.

“A few hours only elapsed between the birth of Ferdinand and the death of the countess, with the delivery of lady Rowley of twins, one of whom expired a few minutes after its birth.

“Soon as the baron was made acquainted with the circumstances, he planned a deep scheme; then visited his lady, and, by arguments, overcame her objections of having the dead child placed by the side of the countess,

countess, whilst the heir was acknowledged as their own child.

"The baron took on himself to have those secured who could lead to a discovery.

"Lady Rowley consented to the wily reasoning of her lord, but insisted on an acknowledgment of the fact; which, should he attain the age of manhood, was to be delivered to the young earl.

"Pleased at the success of his propositions, the baron did not hesitate to comply, trusting the weakness of the parent would be soon followed by the death of the son, and, by that, release him from his engagement.

"Some months elapsed, when the thriving

thriving state of Ferdinand lessened his expectations; he began to entreat the lady Rowley to resign the paper she had extorted from him, to which she returned a firm refusal.

“ The baron finding arguments ineffectual, proceeded to menaces.

“ All were alike useless.

“ At length, lady Rowley ventured to impose on the baron, to secure the child : she made a solemn declaration of having lost the paper, and confirmed it by apparent uneasiness at the circumstance.

“ The baron, not satisfied with her assurance, searched her cabinets, chests, and wherever he suspected it might be concealed.

“ After

“After a fruitless scrutiny, he desisted.

“During these transactions, the lady Rowley persevered in wearing it constantly about her person, resolved on its preservation, whatever danger might accrue.”

Then followed a short addition, bearing date sometime later, which declared the intention of the lady Rowley, finding her health decline, to resign the sacred charge to the care of her beloved child, Isabella, to be delivered in conformity to her orders; concluding by prayers for the support of the illustrious house of Glenmore, in honour, virtue, and fortune.

Beatrice,

Beatrice, who, from the report of the lady Isabella, had been prepos-
 sessed in his favour, even before his
 humanity towards her father had ex-
 cited her gratitude, heard, without
 betraying any mark of pleasure, the
 situation in which he was to be con-
 sidered. She would have rather pre-
 ferred him in his dependent state,
 than in the elevated rank of earl of
 Glenmore.

Ferdinand seized her hand, and, in
 few words, dispelled the sudden re-
 serve which appeared to have taken
 place—assured her the honour of
 possessing her heart and hand would
 far exceed his wealth and title, neither
 of which would increase his happi-
 ness,

ness, but as they might contribute to hers.

“ Generous youth—exalted Ferdinand !” exclaimed sir Horatio Neville with transport, “ I consign my so-late-found daughter to thee.—Oh ! may’st thou prove a lover to her youth, and a friend to her age.

“ I will enforce my claims — equity will restore my fortune—all, all devolves on Beatrice ; nor shall the lord of Glenmore be disgraced by the alliance.”

Hildebrand advanced, embraced Ferdinand, and heartily congratulated him ; adding, as the tear fell from his eye, “ However dear the earl of Glenmore is to my bosom, the
guilt

guilt of a father damps the joy which Hildebrand would otherwise equally partake."

Sir Horatio again suggested his desire to leave the castle.

A repast was served, of which they partook sparingly.

Ferdinand retired to give orders for his departure, and Beatrice, with Emmeline, paid another melancholy visit to the remains of the lady Isabella.

The late depressed state of Beatrice was now succeeded by prospects of future happiness, which received no small addition from the exchanged vows of lasting friendship with Emmeline.

Beatrice again pressed the lips of
 O 2 her

her deceased friend; and kneeling, repeated a short but fervent prayer for the repose of her soul.

On rejoining the party in the hall, they found the pious father Thomas: he had just quitted the baron Rowley, having received from him in few words a confession of the past, and administered the last earthly duties.

The lord Rowley no longer ranked among the living.

This intelligence greatly affected the lady Emmeline, who immediately withdrew.

Ferdinand, laying his hand on his bosom, exclaimed,—“May all enmity be buried with him!—let the union

union of the houses of Rowley and Glenmore, my more than brother, be indissoluble."

Hildebrand, who, whilst the noble guests remained, could not devote himself to the filial offices he would fain perform, returned affectionate answers; and requested Ferdinand would take part in the funeral obsequies, to which the young earl readily consented, adding, that to the remains of the baron, who till that day had acknowledged him as a son, he should respectfully pay the last duty, and only required to execute his promise of that night placing sir Horatio and his daughter in an asylum, and would return to the castle the following morning.

Here father Thomas interposed—observing that the scene of mourning was not yet complete: he had still a mutilated corpse to introduce—the remains of the unfortunate Everard.

A general exclamation of horror ensued.

The holy father then informed the company of his having been called to attend a young man, whom he immediately recognised to be a son of the lord Rowley: he had been found desperately wounded, and borne by the humanity of strangers to their residence.

His confession was ample, and proved a life spent in iniquity.

The bribes which Edward Sandford refused for the sacrifice of Beatrice

trice was the cause of the latter's imprisonment and death; since the revenge in part but executed by the lenient disposition evinced by the baron in favour of Beatrice increased the guilt of Everard:—by the hands of Armstrong he conveyed a subtle poison to the honest peasant, and soon removed him from the affectionate attentions of his adopted child.

To add to these complicated crimes, the murder he had endeavoured to excite his father to commit, and the guilt with which he had blackened the untainted character of Beatrice, plunged the poignant in his own breast, unable to

o 4 support

support the corroding stings of a guilty conscience.

The good priest, in modest terms, expressed the ghostly advice he had endeavoured to instil: but, alas! he died as he had lived—impenitent: and not chusing to have the mangled remains introduced to the castle till he had given information, requested the commands of the young lord Rowley.

Hildebrand replied, he would on the morrow determine the performance of the melancholy rites: then addressing the lords, apologised for the reception they had met with; which, in lieu of a meeting of festivity, had proved a funereal attendance.

The

The guests, with friendly condolence, besought silence on the painful subject: they proposed accompanying sir Horatio, Beatrice, and Ferdinand, who were ready to depart.

The earl Fitzwilliam, who had received from sir Horatio a promise of accompanying him to his seat, and passing some time with his family, now requested the addition of the young earl: then turning to Hildebrand, entreated him not to refuse joining the circle, with the lovely lady Emmeline, as soon as the melancholy rites would permit; adding, he had an affair of much importance to communicate, which he should reserve till the meeting at his castle.

Hildebrand replied, his intentions
 were

were to visit France as early as possible. During his absence he would willingly consign the lady Emmeline to the protection of the earl's amiable family, still more increased in interest by the residence of the lovely Beatrice.

The company then took leave of the young baron.

Sir Horatio proceeded slowly : the exertion of the day prevented his making any distant progress.

On the morrow the earl of Glenmore took leave of his intended bride, and received assurances from her father that the nuptial ceremony should take place on their meeting at the earl Fitzwilliam's.

Beatrice, whose modest cheek was
diffused

diffused with crimson, betrayed in silence she was not insensible to his virtuous passion.

The season was favourable—the party soon reached the castle of Fitzwilliam, where they were introduced and hospitably received by the countess and three accomplished daughters, who were greatly interested for the happiness of Beatrice.

The addition of the earl of Glenmore, the lord Rowley with the lady Emmeline, and on the same day arrived the heir of the earl Fitzwilliam, rendered the party numerous, and, in possession of virtue, enjoying happiness, notwithstanding past occurrences.

On the cheek of the lovely Em

meline still appeared visible dejection: the loss of Isabella, though diminished by the society of Beatrice, could not be wholly replaced.

Her affability, elegance, and simplicity, had soon a powerful effect on the son of their hospitable host.

He sued her hand, and obtained a promise on the return of her brother from the continent, to whom the earl Fitzwilliam had previously applied, and received his perfect approbation.

Ferdinand was rendered happy as he was good in the possession of the daughter of Neville, whose filial conduct never ceased to be regarded by her husband, and was the subject of universal admiration.

Sir

Sir Horatio, by convincing proofs of his identity, obtained the greatest part of his immense property, which he settled on the young countess, reserving only a comparative small independence, with which he might, beyond words, express his gratitude to his Almighty Deliverer—in relieving the sick, in cloathing the naked, and rescuing the widow and orphan from oppression.

He lived to see a numerous offspring of the earl and countess of Glenmore, in whom he exerted his utmost to inculcate the honour of their noble father, and the virtues of their amiable mother.

FINIS.